InfoWorld

The Newsweekly for Microcomputer Users

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Corona PC aggressively rivals IBM PC

By John C. Dvorak, IW Staff

LAS VEGAS, NV—What a difference a year makes to a Westlake Village, California, company with microcomputer pioneer Bob Harp at the helm.

Like a seafaring captain guiding his ship through treacherous straits, Harp has carefully maneuvered Corona Data Systems into both the stormy IBM PC marketplace and the turbulent portable-computer marketplace with the introduction of two new computers at this year's COMDEX.

Both computers are compatible with the IBM PC, and both set a new low-price standard.

The full-size desktop machine, which looks similar to the IBM PC, is appropriately dubbed the Corona PC.

The machine features half-height drives, which allows for the addition of a hard disk without sacrificing the convenience of dual floppies.

The $2595 base price includes a single 320K disk drive, 128K memory, serial and parallel ports, monitor and keyboard. The portable system with the same configuration is only $2395. Except for the different package and smaller screen, the Corona PC and the Portable PC have the same features.

Peculiar to these systems is a 110-watt power supply (IBM has 63 watts) and the ability to put 512K of main memory on the motherboard. Four additional expansion slots are available on the main board.

Another feature that distinguishes

See Corona PC, page 9

Staff walks out on *PC Magazine*, starts new journal

By Deborah Wise, IW Staff

LAS VEGAS, NV—Not all the intrigue and excitement at this year's COMDEX came from microcomputer software and hardware manufacturers.

On the opening day of the show, CW Communications, publisher of computer-related publications including *InfoWorld* and *Computerworld*, announced it had launched a new company to publish a monthly magazine for IBM Personal Computer users, called *PC World*.

The twist to the story is that *PC World* will be run by former staff members of *PC Magazine*, a year-old publication also aimed at IBM Personal Computer users.

A majority of the *PC Magazine* staff resigned two days after that publication came under the control of Ziff-Davis, Inc., a New York City publisher of computer-related publications last month. After they left *PC Magazine*, they approached Patrick J. McGovern, chairman of CW Communications, with the idea for *PC World*.

David Bunnell, who started *PC Magazine* and was its editor, was named publisher and editor-in-chief of *PC World* and president of *PC World*

See PC World, page 10

The only crazy thing about the MAD-1 is its name, says MAD's maker.

MAD impresses COMDEX

Sleek, modular MAD-1 uses Intel chip

By Paul Freiberger, IW Staff

LAS VEGAS, NV—They are calling it the MAD-1.

According to a spokesman for this new Stanford, California, company, though, the only crazy thing about the MAD Computer is its name.

Without any prepublicity and with little fanfare, the MAD-1 computer impressed attendees at the COMDEX show, who visited the MAD booth by the hundreds.

Appearing a little nervous as he gave his first press conference, Egyptian-born company president John Nafeh explained that he chose the Intel 80186 16-bit microprocessor in preparation for "a future generation of software."

The 80186 (known as the iAPX 186) is a more powerful version of the Intel 8086 family of microprocessors. The 186 allows computer designers to replace much support circuitry with a single piece of silicon.

With the announcement of an 80186-based personal computer, MAD is one of the first companies to offer the potential of the new processor at a price that is comparable with other low-cost 16-bit computers.

See MAD-1, page 11

Floppy-disk drives from Apple use new technologies

By Paul Freiberger and John Markoff, IW Staff

LAS VEGAS, NV—Apple Computer has raised the curtain a bit on its new generation of personal computers by unveiling its UniFile and DuoFile high-density floppy-disk drives for the Apple III Computer.

The disk drives use several new technologies to offer storage capacities of 871 kilobytes and 1.7 megabytes respectively.

While the Cupertino, California, computer manufacturer is still tight-lipped about the new computers that it will announce next year, the new disk drives are certain to be incorporated in those products.

Barry Yarkoni, Apple marketing manager, says that the company is "committed to format compatibility . . . and eventually when we announce it on other products, the recording format will be identical."

The new drives are designed to supplement the existing internal Apple III drive, which will be retained to maintain compatibility with existing Apple II software.

Apple has opted for a conservative approach toward increasing storage density in its new disk drives.

While other manufacturers have chosen to increase track densities up to 96 tracks per inch, the new Apple disks have track spacing of 62.5 per inch.

Bit density on each track has been

See Apple drives, page 9

COMDEX Overview

Industry embraces 16-bit microprocessors

By Paul Freiberger, John Markoff and Deborah Wise, IW Staff

Who are these people? These faces! Where do they come from? They look like caricatures of used-car dealers from Dallas. But they're real. And, sweet Jesus, there are a hell of a lot of them . . . —Hunter S. Thompson, Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas

As we sit in our Las Vegas Hilton Hotel room reflecting on the thousands of new microcomputer products packed in the nearby convention center, we feel much as Thompson did on his "savage journey to the heart of the American dream."

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IN FOCUS

Look what they're doing with watches nowadays! They're playing arcade games on them. Electronic games and gifts of all descriptions are abundant this Christmas season. To see if anything piques your interest, please turn to page 31.

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Multiplan — 175 179
MUSE
Muse text/μ-80 — 175 126
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Elementary Math Apple Soft 48K** — 50 36
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** Requires Applesoft ROM or Apple II Plus
Osborne
The Word Plus — 150 112

On-Line Systems — List New
The General Manager (new) — 230 170
Screenwriter II — 130 110
The Dictionary — 100 72
Expeditor II+ (Applesoft compiler) — 135 102
LISA 2.5 — 80 57
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LISA Educational Package — 120 85
MMSN (Memory Management System) — 50 36
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Select with Superspell — 595 369
Silicon Valley
Word Handler — 199 149
Swiftcalc — 125 93
Softtech — 125 93
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PFS: Report (New) — 95 75
PFS: Graph — 125 93
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Supercalc — 295 185
Southeastern Software
Data Capture 4.0 — 65 53
Data Capture 4.0/Video Smartterm Supervisor — 90 75
Stoneware
DBMaster — 229 179
Utility Pak #1 — 99 79
Utility Pak #2 — 99 79
DBMaster/Hard Disk — 499 389
Star Pac — 99 79
Micro Memo — 40 30
Electronic Price Tag — 100 72
Computacube — 30 30
Graphics Processing System (Standard) — 60 48
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Sunrise
Accounting Plus** — 150 108
GL, AR, AP, inv ea. — 395 295
All four — 1250 1000
Verza Computing
VersaWriter Expansion Kit — 40 32
VersaWriter Expansion Pac-II — 40 32
AXE (Apple Extended Editor) — 70 54
Graphics Graphics Tablet (accessory) — 299 240
WizCorp (Personal Software)
VisiCalc II 3.3 — 250 169
VisiTrend/Plot — 300 229
Desktop Plan II — 250 169
VisiPlot — 200 169
VisiTrend/VisiPlot — 300 229
VisiDex — 250 169
VisiTerm — 100 72
VisiSchedule — 300 229
VisiPlus — 700 529
Business Forecasting Model (reg. Visicalc) — 100 78
Visicalc — 250 184

APPLE* HARDWARE

Hayes
Micromodem II — 379 279
Micromate — 195 149
System Saver (Fan) — 90 72
Micro Sci
A2-35T Disk Drive — 495 379
Microsoft
RAMcard (memory board) — 145 99
Softcard — 345 295
Softcard Upgrade — 195 149
Z-80 Microsoft System Soft-ware, 16K RAMcard, Video Videotern 80 col. Card Softswitch, Osborne CP/M User Guide — 695 529
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WHY PAY MORE?

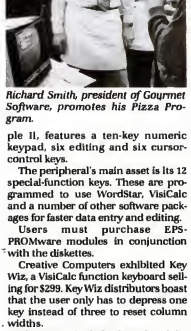
Applefest/San Francisco

By Kathy Chin and Scott Mace, IW Staff

An estimated 26,342 technical experts, computer junkies and potential users attending Applefest/San Francisco last month were exposed to what the 200-plus companies referred to as their "latest, newest, first, only, one-of-a-kind" wares.

Wide-eyed novices to sleepy-eyed, well-read computerists gleamed over this show's trendy focus on Apple aids from businesses such as Executive Peripheral Systems (EPS) in Palo Alto, California; Osmosis in San Francisco; Creative Computer in Forked River, New Jersey; and Millenium 3 Engineering in Westwood, California.

EPS unveiled its new detachable keyboard at the show. The $399.95 keyboard, which plugs right into the Apple II, features a ten-key numeric keypad, six editing and six cursor-control keys.



Richard Smith, president of Gourmet Software, promotes his Pizza Program.

The peripheral's main asset is its 12 special-function keys. These are programmed to use WordStar, VisiCalc and a number of other software packages for faster data entry and editing.

Users must purchase EPS-PROMware modules in conjunction with the diskettes.

Creative Computers exhibited Key Wiz, a VisiCalc function keyboard selling for $299. Key Wiz distributors boast that the user only has to depress one key instead of three to reset column widths.

The 12 × 6-inch keyboard weighs less than three pounds. Key Wiz contains a 19-key numeric keypad and 30 VisiCalc commands.

Osmosis introduced Osmosis Manual II and Osmosis Programmable Manual II, each a barstrip of 16 keys that fits horizontally above the keyboard.

128 characters per key

The keys on the Manual II, priced at $135, provide 32 separate functions for WordStar or VisiCalc. Each key on the $195 Programmable can produce up to 128 characters.

Analytical Engines (AE), based in Austin, Texas, displayed Saybrook, a peripheral card designed to increase Apple II memory to 128K.

According to AE, the card boosts computational capability to 10 to 20 times the speed of Apple II, III or the IBM Personal Computer.

For $995 per card, users receive the UCSD p-System Plus Version IV. The Saybrook card has 128K RAM, expandable to 256K, and a time clock.

Millenium 3 Engineering introduced the Arcade Board, a peripheral that supplies entertainment by generating color graphics, sound effects and music. Using the TMS 9918A video-display processor and General Instruments AY3-8912 programmable sound generator, the board features 16 colors, multiplanar graphics and table-driven graphics to allow differ-

See Applefest, page 6

Applefest/San Francisco attracted more than 20,000 Apple devotees.

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Applefest gorilla calls on Micro Mother Goose at the San Francisco convention.

Applefest

continued from preceding page

ent types of animation.

Micron Technology of Boise, Idaho, introduced a photo digitizing system that uses a 64K dynamic RAM chip as an imaging element. According to Carl Baker of Micron, the system focuses light, using a standard TV camera lens, onto a RAM chip with more than 65,000 light-sensitive cells. The cells convert the incoming light into a bit-mapped image that can be stored or displayed on the Apple II.

Baker said the system can be used for optical character recognition or digitized mapping, although it reproduces blacks and whites only, not gray scales. Micron supplies the hardware and software for $450 retail, which includes a custom card for one of the Apple's slots, a serial interface plus special software for Apple Pascal or Applesoft BASIC. Micron, itself a manufacturer of 64K dynamic RAM chips, is preparing interfaces for the IBM PC and the Radio Shack Color Computer.

Applefest exhibitors maintained the atmosphere of a full-fledged carnival, and kids flocked to the video games.

One such game was The Desecration, from Mind Games of Beverly Hills, California. The first in a series of "adventurecades," the game combines adventure themes with the action of arcade games.

The player, also known as Intergalactic Assassin, must save the Dendoron Galaxy from the parasitic desecration of the Pykronian Empire. The players must escape the crossfire of the Android patrol while dodging the bombs of the Pykronian Air Command.

Of course, no fair is a real fair without food.

Richard Smith, president of Gourmet Software, attracted attention to his company's Pizza Program. Smith explained that the software package contains a data base that includes food groups, shopping lists and menu plans for impatient homemakers and busy bachelors.

According to Smith, Pizza Program is Gourmet Software's first product. It was developed ten years ago by an engineer who designed the program at the request of his wife. Since then, the package has been tested and refined.

"We expanded the idea of ten years ago," he said. "It's ten times better and does everything but the dishes."

Those who are on diets can turn to Health Aide, prepared by Robert Etheredge, president of Knossos in Corte Madera, California.

For $59.95, the package includes two disks, a user guide/reference manual and reference cards. The diet planner allows users to determine daily calorie needs as well as exercise requirements.

Computerized soothsayer

In accord with the carnival theme, users lined up to have their fortunes told by Madame Shepp. Shepp is not a woman, but a program designed by G.V.S.T. of Mill Valley, California. When spectators punch in questions regarding romance, money or anything else, the computerized soothsayer uses tarot cards to reveal the unknown. The disk retails in computer stores for $50.

Exhibitors successfully used attention-getting devices such as a mime, gorilla and a girl wearing a sandwich board. If an organ-grinder and a computerized monkey had been on hand, the carnival scenario would have been complete. ■

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COMDEX overview

continued from page 1

More than a thousand exhibitors have filled the vast Las Vegas Convention Center, which has been expanded since last year. The show is so big, in fact, that trying to see everything in a few days is impossible.

Most COMDEX shows have interesting new-product announcements, and this show is no exception. A quantum leap in processing power is visible to the naked eye—dozens of new microcomputers equipped with 16-bit microprocessors line the aisles.

The personal computer of 1982 is a slick-looking, "ergonomically designed" machine. It's as if the industry had collectively decided that if Datsuns can look like Porsches, then why can't Qume terminals and MAD computers look like they were designed by Italian designers?

> No longer do most booths feature scantily clad women as major drawing card for sightseers. Those days are over.

Even a computer show changes with the times. No longer do most booths feature scantily clad women as the major drawing card for sightseers. Those days appear to be over. Now, many booths highlight magicians, talking "high-tech" robots and computerized slot-machines demonstration programs.

For the first time, a selection of second-generation software products specifically designed for the 16-bit microprocessor were on view.

Large crowds at the VisiCorp booth watched attentively as Visi on was demonstrated each half hour. Visi on is intended to serve a new user interface that runs above the operating system and handles application software. The hardware-independent system controls interaction with the screen and offers bit-mapped, high-resolution graphics and windows that can display several screens of information simultaneously.

The system employs a two-button mouse to issue commands to the screen and scroll text on the screen.

Visi on was introduced first on the IBM Personal Computer, and Digital Equipment Corporation announced that it would make Visi on available on its professional series of personal computers.

Although Visi on can be seen today, VisiCorp deliveries will not begin before the middle of 1983.

Mitch Kapor, president of Lotus Development Corporation and designer of VisiPlot and VisiTrend, demonstrated his company's integrated database management and business-graphics package called 1-2-3. The first version, which is designed for the IBM Personal Computer, has limited text-editing abilities, but Kapor said that a revised, updated version is in the works.

Not to be outdone, MicroPro International displayed its integrated database management and report-generating package called InfoStar. It's a combination of DataStar and ReportStar and uses a subset of the WordStar command structure.

Hyperstylized plastic

Hardware also had a new look at this show. New computers are elegantly contained in hyperstylized plastic modules. The days of the kludge are over.

A start-up company called MAD Computer impressed everyone with its good-looking machine (see related article), while an established company, Canon, offered its microcomputer entry, the AS-100, a full-color system with a detachable keyboard and a mouselike pointing device. Canon is providing both the CP/M-86 and MS-DOS operating systems.

Although most look-alike computers are imitating the IBM PC, new Apple II look-alikes are still cropping up.

Diamond Computers, a Los Altos, California-based company that has Korean connections, brought a nonfunctional version of the Diamond C-2 personal computer.

Diamond claimed that the C-2 will be fully Apple-compatible. The system sports an "ergonomic" terminal and keyboard.

For once, the elements didn't cooperate with the nation's largest small-computer show. The mammoth Las Vegas Convention Center was totally unprepared for the dregs of a hurricane that blew out of the Pacific Ocean on the second day of COMDEX.

While gale force winds whipped down the Strip, several inches of rain descended on the roof of the convention center, which was obviously better prepared for warding off the scorching desert sun.

Within hours after the rain started, a downpour had begun inside the convention center, drenching several booths that sprouted umbrellas and plastic sheets in an effort to ward off the onslaught and save the computers and terminals beneath.

To make matters worse, thousands of shipping crates were caught outside in the deluge, leaving exhibitors wondering how they were going to ship their equipment home. ■

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For above Combo Plus™ 128K add $85 for 192K add $192 for 256K add $256		
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128K	$ 535	$348
192K	$ 675	$435
256K	$ 795	$495
CORVUS Hard Disk System		Call
CURTIS, PC Pedestal™ for Display on PC	$ 80	$ 85
8 Foot Cable for IBM Mono Display (extends 3' M 913)	$ 50	$ 45
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128K RAM Card w Parity	$ 515	$395
256K RAM Card w/Parity	$ 875	$658
64K RAM Chips™	$ 175	$190
Tecmar Inc. ALLinONE Board 64K	$ 565	$415
128K	$ 735	$535
256K	$ 975	$675
QUADRAM CORPORATION Quadboard, 64K expandable to 256K 4 function board	$ 590	$435
Quadboard, 128K expandable to 256K 4 function board	$ 775	$565
Quadboard, 192K expandable to 256K, 4 function board	$ 895	$690
★ Quadboard 256K four function board	$ 995	$470
Memory Board 512K with Serial Port #6512	$1290	$995
Memory Upgrade Kit 64K (9 chips), #8260	$ 150	$ 99
Microfazer Snap-on 8K Par/Par Epson #ME8 w/PS1	$ 190	$145
Microfazer Snap-on 64K Par/Par Epson #ME64 w/PS1	$ 299	$235
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COMREX Comriter CR-1 RS232 Serial I/F 200 wpm	$1190	$845
Comriter Tractor Feed for CR-1	$ 110	$ 99
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Item	List Price	Our Price
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MX100 F/T III with Graftrax+	$ 995	$699
IBM PC to Epson Cable	$ 80	$ 45
Apple Interface and Cable for MX80 or MX100	$ 120	$ 99
Grappler+ by Orange Micro, specify printer	$ 165	$119
Apple Graphics Dump	$ 15	$ 9
Atari to Epson Cable	$ 40	$ 30
TRS 80 to Epson Cable	$ 40	$ 30
Other cables, interfaces, ribbons, heads and paper in stock		Call

8" CP/M-80 BUSINESS & SYSTEM SOFTWARE

Item	List Price	Our Price
★ ASHTON-TATE dBase II	$ 700	$449
COMSHARE TARGET Target PlannerCalc	$ 99	$ 99
Masterplanner	$ 325	$225
PlannerCalc Applications Pkg	$ 50	$ 40
PlannerCalc Combo Pkg	$ 199	$ 85
INFOCOM Deadline	$ 60	$ 45
Zork I	$ 50	$ 39
Zork II	$ 50	$ 99
Zork III NEW	$ 50	$ 99
Starcross NEW	$ 50	$ 99
ISM Mathemagic	$ 100	$ 75
MICROCRAFT Legal Billing & Time Keeping	$ 750	$395
Prof Billing & Time Keeping — Billkeeper	$ 750	$395
★ MICROPRO WordStar® plus free WordStar Training Manual	$ 495	$248
MailMerge™	$ 250	$ 79
SpellStar ™	$ 250	$199
3 Pak, Word & Mail & Spell, 3 above	$ 845	$395
SuperSort	$ 250	$169
DataStar	$ 295	$199
CalcStar	$ 145	$ 99
MICROSOFT Multiplan	$ 275	$199
Fortran 80	$ 500	$325
BASIC Compiler	$ 395	$295
COBOL 80	$ 750	$545
BASIC 80	$ 350	$275
muLisp/muStar 80	$ 200	$145
M Sort 80	$ 199	$145
Edit 80	$ 120	$ 80
Macro 80	$ 200	$145
OASIS. The Word Plus (45,000 word verification)	$ 150	Call
PEACHTREE. Magic Wand	$ 500	$199
Series 4 GL, AR, AP or Inventory each	$ 600	$399
Series 9 GL, AR, AP Inv or Pay each	$ 750	$499
Series 8 Peach Text	$ 500	$330
Series 9 Spelling Proofreader	$ 300	$199
Series 8 Calc, Mail List or Telecomm. each	$ 375	$245
PERFECT SOFTWARE. Perfect Writer ™	$ 389	$299
Perfect Speller ™	$ 199	$119
Perfect Filer ™	$ 289	$179
SELECT INFO Select (a WPS)	$ 599	$399

MONITORS

Item	List Price	Our Price
NEC. 12" Green	$ 249	$159
12" Color Composite	$ 450	$349
SANYO 9" B&W	$ 190	$149
9" Green	$ 200	$139
★ 12" B&W Special Truckload Sale	$ 250	$139
12" Green	$ 260	$195
13" Color Composite	$ 470	$349
13" Color RGB	$ 995	$799
ZENITH 12" Green	$ 150	$119
AMDEK. 12" Green #300	$ 200	$159
13" Color I Composite	$ 449	$359
13" Color II RGB Hi Res (Ap II, III & IBM PC)	$ 899	$799
13" Color III RGB Commercial (Ap II, III)	$ 509	$468
DVM Color II or III to Apple II Interface	$ 199	$175
Note Color II and III come with cable for IBM PC		

MODEMS AND TELE COMMUNICATIONS TERMINAL

Item	List Price	Our Price
HAYES. Micromodem II (for the Apple II)	$ 379	$299
Apple Terminal Program for Micromodem II	$ 99	$ 69
NOVATION Applecat II Modem	$ 389	$289
212 Apple Cat	$ 725	$599
HAYES. Stock Chronograph (RS-232)	$ 249	$189
Stock Smartmodem (RS 232)	$ 289	$225
Smartmodem 1200 (RS 232)	$ 699	$535
Micromodem 100 (S 100 bus)	$ 399	$275
SIGNALMAN Modem MKI (RS 232)	$ 99	$ 90
IBM PC to Modem Cable	$ 39	$ 29
AXLON Dataline 1000 Hand Held Communications Terminal	$ 399	$325

CORVUS SYSTEMS

Item	List Price	Our Price
★ 5 Meg Hard Disk, w/o interface	$2995	$2095
★ 11 Meg Hard Disk w/o interface	$4795	$2685
★ 20 Meg Hard Disk w/o interface	$5795	$3495
IBM PC Interface (IBM DOS) Manual & Cable 5	$ 300	$239
Mirror built in for easy backup	$ 790	$585
Apple Interface Manual & Cable 5	$ 300	$299
Other Interfaces, Omni Net, Constellation, Mirror All in Stock		

hp	List Price	Our Price
H/P 7470A Graphics Plotter	$1550	$1185
H/P 41C Calculator	$ 195	$169
H/P 41CV Calculator with 2.2K Memory	$ 275	$239

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Apple drives

continued from page 1

increased to 10,000 per inch, based on the introduction of a new floppy-disk medium.

According to Yarkoni, the new disks will offer significantly longer floppy-disk life than current dual-headed drives.

"Media wear has been a major problem," Yarkoni says. "We think that we will set a new standard in the area of disk life."

Disk drives that offer dual-sided reading capabilities usually have heads on each side of the diskette, at the same place, pressing against each other. In the UniFile and DuoFile, the disk heads have been moved to opposite sides of the disk. Instead of pressing against each other, the heads will press against a pressure plate designed to reduce wear.

The new disks will also use an Intel-

> 'Media wear has been a major problem. We think we'll set a new standard in the area of disk media.'
> —Apple rep Barry Yarkoni

ligent controller to allow increased sector densities by varying the system's rotational speed.

Yarkoni says that the new disk drives are the result of a three-year development project at Apple. He adds that Apple plans to manufacture the drives and that Alps, a Japanese corporation has been selected as a second source to produce drives.

The UniFile, with an add-in disk controller for the Apple III, will be priced at $995. DuoFile will cost $1695.

Yarkoni says that the new drives will be attractive to users who don't want to pay the cost of a hard disk to gain increased storage. Apple has also decided to lower the price of its ProFile hard disk to $2195, down from $2995. Yarkoni says that the new disks will not compete with the ProFile.

At COMDEX, Apple also announced Backup III, an "intelligent backup program" that will allow users to systematically back up the ProFile hard disk for the first time.

In addition, Apple introduced COBOL III, developed by Micro Focus for the Apple III. The new COBOL will be priced at $495.

Finally, Apple said it will offer an IBM 3270 cluster-controller emulator. The new hardware/software interface will allow up to seven Apple II and Apple III computers to communicate with an IBM host.

The device will be available in a System Network Architecture/Synchronous Data Link Control (SNA/SDLC) version and a Binary Synchronous Communication (BSC) version that emulates the IBM 3271 Cluster Controller. The product is scheduled to be available in the middle of 1983, according to Apple. No price has been set. ■

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Disk, Micro Sci A2 Only	$479	$299

The B&H Apple II+ differs from the Apple II+ only in that it has a black hardware case and a warranty is larger.
Warranty factory warranty is for Bell and Howell (not for Apple) and is for one year. Bell and Howell warranty service available at Bell and Howell service centers or report to Computer Exchange.

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HARDWARE for Apple II/II+

	LIST PRICE	OUR PRICE
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CDEX 16K Card	160	$ 139
ALS. 400Plus	160	$ 140
Microsoft 16K Card	150	$ 130
Saturn Systems,	129	$ 109
	179	$ 149
	239	$ 199
Aeton	159	$ 475
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Vista Vision 80	$ 395	$299
MISCELLANEOUS		
ALS. Smarter-II Clock Card Sys	$ 345	$249
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Transcriptor, Typriter Saver	$ 85	$ 65
Kraft Joysticks	$ 40	$ 29
Kraft Joysticks	$ 50	$ 39
B.&B. Sup-R Box	$ 55	$ 39
Microtrend, DMA Softcard Pack	$ 345	$265
Softcard Promotion Pack	$ 695	$495
Microtrend, Z-80	$ 395	$299
Mountain, CPS Multifunction Card	$ 230	$189
Orange Micro, Grappler Plus	$ 165	$119
Practical Peripherals:		
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32KB Parallel Board	$ 189	$149
Microbuffer II 16K, (upside)	$ 299	$239
Microbuffer II 32K, (upside)	$ 299	$239
PTC, Apple Card, 16 Indicators,		
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6 Mhz	$ 495	$395
BM Electronics, Super Fan II	$ 75	$ 59
SSM AIO-11 Serial/Para Interface	$ 225	$169
TG Products, Game Paddles	$ 40	$ 29
Joystick	$ 60	$ 51
Select-A-Port	$ 80	$ 59
Vanlex, Versatyping		
Grappler Plus	$ 300	$239
Vanlex, Implosion 80 col	$ 345	$249
Soft Video Switch	$ 35	$ 25
Enhancer II	$ 195	$ 99
Function Strip	$ 79	$ 59
Full Video Line, Call for 25% off		
MICRO, Tracksaver	$ 89	$ 55

SOFTWARE on disk for Apple II/II+

BUSINESS

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Apple Computer, Inc.		
The Computer Co. GL, AR, AP	$ 425	$289
Apple Writer II	$ 250	$189
Apple Pascal	$ 250	$189
Apple Fortran	$ 200	$159
DOS Tool Kit	$ 75	$ 59
DOS 3.3 Upgrade Kit	$ 70	$ 59
Pascal 1.1	$ 350	$249
Ap Profile Evaluator	$ 95	$ 45
How to?	$ 50	$ 29
Microtrend	$ 250	$229
Micro Integrator	$ 250	$125
Micro Text	$ 125	$ 99
Applied Soft Ware, VersaForm	$ 125	$ 99
Artsci, MagicWindow II New!	$ 150	$ 99
Author-Info, Author II (ZF/96)	$ 200	$125
Continental, CL, AR, AP w/PR ea.	$ 250	$189
1st Class Mail	$ 175	$ 49
Inventory	$ 175	$ 49
Hayden, Pro Writer (Specify Ver.)	$ 125	$ 99
❖ High Tech, Job Control Sys.	$ 150	$129
Info Master	$ 189	$159
Howard Soft,		
Real Estate Analyzer II	$ 195	$129
Text Master	$ 125	$ 99
Info. Unlim., Easywriter (PRO)	$ 175	$119
❖ Kim, Spellguard (ZF/96)	$ 70	$ 49
LJK, Letter Perfect w/SpellGuard	$ 95	$ 39
❖ Micro Craft, (ZF/96)		
Mailing List Manager	$ 250	$195
Large Bking & Investpkg	$ 250	$195
Micro Lab, Inventor Factory	$ 300	$ 99
Sort Manager	$ 100	$ 79
Micro Pro, (all ZF/96)		
Wordstar, Mailmerge/Manual	$ 495	$395
MailMerge II	$ 195	$159
SpellStar II	$ 250	$ 99
WS/CP/M, (ver 3 alone	$ 495	$395
Data Star II	$ 295	$249
❖ Microsoft, Multi-Plan (CP/M)	$ 275	$189
Multi-Plan (DOS 3.3) New!	$ 275	$175
Mona, Super Text II (CP/M)	$ 150	$ 99
Super Text II/Z-80 New!	$ 175	$ 99
❖ On-Line, SuperWriter II	$ 130	$ 99
The Dictionary New!	$ 100	$ 79
General Manager II New!	$ 200	$155
Pro Tech, Pro Writer	$ 125	$ 99
Quality, Word Pro 3	$ 350	$249
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program for the Apple II	$ 100	$ 99
❖ Practical Ware Program		
Practical Ware Business programs		
Second Source (Ver.SpellGuard)	$ 150	$ 49
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Sensor 4D Inv or Tax ea.	$ 250	$189
Sensor II Inv/Tax/Payroll/AR	$ 595	$395
Sensor 4D GL & AR & AP Vers.	$ 595	$395
Perfect, Perfect Calc	$ 189	$129
Perfect Speller	$ 189	$129
Perfect Filer	$ 189	$129
Quality, GBS w/1 gen (in DENVER)	$ 650	$475
Sensible, Sam, Speller specify	$ 125	$ 99
❖ Silicon Valley, Word Handler	$ 250	$129
Spell Pack, Spellmaster II	$ 125	$ 99
Executive Speller	$ 125	$ 99
Solitaire/Turbolch		
❖ Doubletime	$ 800	$395
Sleuthsayer	$ 750	$495
Spectrum, Inc.		
Acctg. Plus, General Ledger	$ 495	$299
Acctg. Plus, GL AP and A/R	$ 995	$695
Acctg. Plus, above + Inventory	$1395	$975
Spectral Associates		
Tax Manager	$ 175	$ 95
Report	$ 125	$ 79
Graph	$ 125	$ 95
Southwestern Data Systems, call in specify		
Stoneware, DB Master	$ 279	$155
DB Utility I or II	$ 99	$ 89
Video,		
Appliware II protect disk	$ 20	$ 15
Visicalc in 64K protect disk	$ 20	$ 15
Visicalc in 16K protect disk	$ 80	$ 69
VisiCalc/Personal Software		
Visicalc 3.3	$ 250	$129
Visiplot	Special	$ 129
VisiFile	$ 250	$129
Damian Plus II	$ 250	$129
Damian Plus III	$ 300	$189
Hesiod	$ 200	$149
Visiterm/Hesiod New!	$ 200	$149
VisiCorp & VisiPro	$ 300	$219
VisiTrex	$ 100	$ 79

UTILITY & DEVELOPMENT

	LIST PRICE	OUR PRICE
Aesgis, Copy II Plus	$ 36	$ 22
DOS Boss	$ 24	$ 19
Nibble Mate	$ 24	$ 19
Control Point Software		
Fator DOS Utility	$ 20	$ 15
Copy II Plus (for protect)	$ 36	$ 22
Epson, Graphics Dump	$ 15	$ 9
Hayden,		
TypeWriter by Lubar	$ 75	$ 99
TypeQWIK by Pat Paul Lubar	$ 125	$ 99
Microsoft,		
A1.S2	$ 175	$129
Cobol Compiler	$ 750	$495
Cobol Ver. 2	$ 750	$495
Fortran 80	$ 395	$349
TRS Compiler	$ 175	$129
❖ Omega, Locksmith (for copies)	$ 100	$ 75
Paragon, Comp Graphics, Hawk's Nest	$ 125	$ 99
Graphics Magician New!	$ 60	$ 51
Phoenix, Crack Nine New!	$ 100	$ 79
Quality, Bug of Track New!	$ 40	$ 29
Sensible, Hack It Up, (list copies)	$ 80	$ 49

HOME & EDUCATION

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Apple Fun	$ 30	$ 21
Bank Street Writer	$ 70	$ 49
Choplifter New!	$ 30	$ 25
Many others		Call
Hayden, Family Shelter	$ 29	$ 22
Continuum, Home Accountant	$ 75	$ 49
Continuum, Home Inventory	$ 75	$ 49
Datasoft, Canyon Climber New!	$ 28	$ 22
Tile Wars, Serve or smash	$ 28	$ 22
Edu Ware,		
Introduction 3 Pack	$ 50	$ 35
Algebra Series II (Demo)	$ 50	$ 35
Infinite, Deadline	$ 50	$ 38
Infocom, Zork Quest by Lubar	$ 40	$ 29
Logic Maze New!	$ 35	$ 29
Spider Raid New!	$ 30	$ 24
Lightning, Mathtrotter	$ 30	$ 24
Microsoft, Olympic Decathlon	$ 30	$ 24
Time Zone Ver 1	$ 50	$ 39
Mona, Robot War	$ 30	$ 24
Castle Wolfenstein	$ 30	$ 21
On-Line, Frogger New!	$ 30	$ 24
Ultima II	$ 55	$ 40
Selkirk, Sargon II Rated	$ 40	$ 29
Personal Software, Mary Dunbar	$ 30	$ 24
Sirius, Gorgon	$ 40	$ 29
Sir-Tech, Wizardry	$ 40	$ 29
Knight of Diamonds New!	$ 25	$ 20
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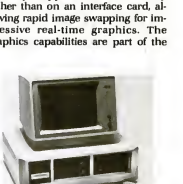
Corona PC

continued from page 1

the Coronas from the IBM PC is the graphics capability of the new machines. Without loss of IBM software compatibility, the Coronas can generate 640 × 325 resolution. The screen is memory-mapped in main memory rather than an interface card, allowing rapid image swapping for impressive real-time graphics. The graphics capabilities are part of the



Corona's new computers are compatible with the IBM PC.

machine, so no expansion slot is needed for a graphics card. The company showed that text and graphics can be intermixed and overlapped.

The character-generation resolution is also better than the IBM's, with a 16 × 13 matrix, compared to IBM's 14 × 7.

The keyboard is almost an exact duplicate of the IBM keyboard, retaining the controversial key placement.

According to Robert Kramarz, vice-president of corporate communications, Corona is seriously thinking about using a standard Selectric layout instead.

According to Corona president, Daniel Carter, the company plans to offer MS-DOS, UCSD p-System, CP/M-86 and finally UNIX. "We are developing our own word processor, too," added Carter.

Carter said that he doesn't think this product will attract the same fanfare as an Osborne would, but that it will compete in the lucrative IBM market.

Initial shipments of the Corona PC will begin in January 1983, and the Portable PC is scheduled for April 1983. The machines are slated to be shipped with MS-DOS, graphics, BASIC and a spreadsheet package at no extra cost. ■

PC World

continued from page 1

Communications, a newly formed subsidiary of CW Communications.

The rift with Ziff-Davis occurred because *PC Magazine* staff members felt their rights had been violated when the majority stockholder and founder of the magazine, Anthony Gold (who is also a founder of Lifeboat Associates), sold his share of the company to Ziff-Davis.

Last year Gold put up about $200,000 to start Software Communications, the company that published *PC Magazine*. According to Bunnell, Gold owned 55% of the venture. Bunnell and other staff members controlled the remaining 45%.

The agreement with Gold, which Bunnell said was in the form of several letters, showed that Bunnell's percentage of the stock would be fully vested over a three-year period. It also said that if during that time a controlling interest in the company was sold, the 45% would revert to Bunnell and his staff immediately.

Over the past four months, *PC Magazine* had been courted by numerous suitors, including CW Communications, Ziff-Davis, CBS Publications, McGraw-Hill Publications and others, Bunnell said. He said all the interested parties, except Ziff-Davis, recognized that Bunnell and his staff controlled 45% of the company. "Ziff-Davis was not our first choice as a buyer.

"Tony Gold promised in writing and orally that he would not conclude a deal with Ziff-Davis until he had [the staff's] approval," Bunnell added.

PC Magazine was interested in merging with a larger organization that would help finance its growth, Bunnell said.

"It was a mutually agreed-upon plan between David and me to find somebody who had the publishing and financial resources to develop a very valuable property," said Gold

Bunnell maintained that his relationship with Tony Gold had been strained because of lack of financial and moral support. "He called us an artistic success and a commercial failure. We felt he didn't care," said Bunnell.

"The morale has been low recently at *PC Magazine*. On November 9, when Tony came to the offices, he harassed the staff so much the entire staff walked out," said Cheryl Woodard, former associate publisher at *PC Magazine*, who was named *PC World*'s associate publisher.

Gold would not comment on his relationship with Bunnell and the *PC Magazine* staff. He did say, however, "I sincerely believe my transaction [with Ziff-Davis] didn't disadvantage David."

Ziff-Davis took control of *PC Magazine* on Friday, November 19. Bunnell found out the following Monday. He said he turned up for work to find executives from Ziff-Davis waiting at the *PC Magazine* offices in San Francisco. They informed Bunnell that Ziff-Davis controlled the publication and offered Bunnell and the staff new employment contracts as a substitute for equity, according to Bunnell. "We didn't feel we had a choice but to negotiate," said Bunnell.

Bunnell then approached CW's McGovern.

No comment

"The people at *PC Magazine* came to me and said the sale [to Ziff-Davis] was a great surprise and violated agreements they had with the majority shareholder [Tony Gold]," said McGovern. "They said they couldn't in good faith work for the new publisher and said they would resign and asked if they could join our organization."

Ziff-Davis would not comment on the developments, said Larry Sporn, executive vice-president.

At the time this story went to press, no legal action had been taken by any of the parties involved in the negotiations.

The first issue of the new magazine *PC World* is scheduled for January 1983. "The first issue is going to be on second-generation software for the IBM Personal Computer," said Andrew Fluegelman, former associate editor of *PC Magazine*, who was named editor of *PC World*.

COMDEX was much the same this year as last for the former staff of *PC Magazine*. In 1981, they cruised the aisles trying to sell the idea for a new magazine, called *PC*, dedicated to the IBM PC user. This year they were doing the same for *PC World*. ■

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SofTech releases three products for the UCSD p-System

Print Spooler, KSAM, Edvance are new offerings

By Scott Mace, IW Staff

Print spooling, a keyed sequential access (KSAM) feature and an advanced system editor are being released for the UCSD p-System by SofTech Microsystems.

Print Spooler allows users to have text files printed continuing normal p-System operations, such as text editing or data entry.

The spooler permits users to create a print queue of up to 21 files, to delete files from the print queue, to display the names from the print queue, to display the names of files currently in the print queue, to temporarily or permanently halt printing of the current file, to continue printing the current file after a temporary halt or to print the next file after a permanent halt.

KSAM supports sequential and keyed retrieval of data. It is designed for use in applications where fast access to information is necessary. Such applications include inventory control, reservation systems, library systems and accounts receivable.

Records contained in UCSD p-System files of such applications can be designated and retreived by means of identifying keys within each record. Examples of such keys are parts numbers for inventory control, account numbers for billing systems and customer names for mailing-list applications.

Users can invoke the new system editor, Edvance, as the standard p-System editor if they choose. Edvance is available as an option.

Edvance includes several enhancements over the normal p-System editor. With Edvance, users can edit arbitrarily large files, limited only by disk capacity; "paint" tables and graphs on the terminal screen; edit a file within a file and then return to the original file; "remember" keystroke sequences through user-defined macros; and obtain a menu of text files from within the editor.

The print spooler sells for $50. KSAM and Edvance are available for $200 each. ■

MAD-1

continued from page 1

MAD stands for Modular Advanced Design. The new computer is a handsome, futuristic-looking system with a flat, lightweight keyboard and thin dual disk drives that match the "module" that houses the computer's CPU. The SyQuest 3.9-inch, five-megabyte, removable-cartridge hard disk is available as an option.

The tilting display looks similar to the one used on the DEC Rainbow computer.

A basic configuration that will cost around $3000 comes with 128K RAM; 16K ROM; a 5¼-inch double-sided, double-density disk drive with 320K bytes of formatted storage; two RS-232 serial interface ports; and one parallel port. The display has 720 X 350 pixel resolution, a phosphor green display and a video controller that offers both color and monochrome display.

When the machine is shipped in early 1983, it will come with the MS-DOS operating system. Concurrent CP/M-86 will be available as an option. Application software is likely to include WordStar and Peachtree accounting programs.

The big difference between the MAD-1 and the array of PC clones, according to Nafeh, is the software planned for release 18 months from now. "These application programs will represent a quantum leap forward in performance and simplicity of operations. The microcomputer, as we know it today, will seem as primitive as the slide rule, compared to the digital calculator." ■

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New software announced for the Timex/Sinclair 1000

By David Needle, IW Staff

Mindware Incorporated, the first company to market a printer for the Sinclair ZX81 and Timex/Sinclair 1000 computers in the United States, recently announced a series of 20 "quick-loading" software packages for the machine.

Among the programs Mindware is offering for the $99 Model 1000 computer are six business titles—an electronic spreadsheet, data-base management, word processing, inventory control, forecasting/graphs and video slide-show software.

Mindware's software for the Timex/Sinclair 1000

The Mindware software includes a proprietary Quickload feature that the company claims can load its programs up to four times faster than conventional Timex/Sinclair software.

"Quickload verifies whether or not the computer is loading properly, which solves a significant problem inherent in the Timex/Sinclair 1000 design," noted Mindware president Michael Levy. If information is lost, the screen goes blank, allowing the user to rewind the program only a short way and resume input, he added.

The Mindware software selections also include two engineering programs, three advanced programming aids and nine games.

Mindware, based in Natick, Massachusetts, obtained exclusive U.S. distribution rights for most of its software from companies in the United Kingdom that have been marketing software for the ZX81 since shortly after the machine was first introduced there last year.

Low price

According to Levy, Timex expects to sell at least 350,000 Timex/Sinclair 1000 computers in the U.S. by the end of 1982.

A Mindware official said the software series, priced between $9.95 and $24.95, will be distributed primarily through mass merchandisers and some computer retailers and will be available to consumers this month. ■

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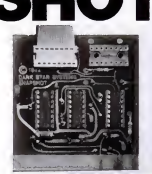

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Industry hails SyQuest's 3.9-inch hard-disk drive

By John Markoff, IW Staff

LAS VEGAS, NV—The impact of new hard-disk technologies was apparent at the 1982 COMDEX, and one of the most popular new disk drives in both portable and new slim-line desktop computers appears to be SyQuest's SQ306 3.9-inch Winchester drive, which has five megabytes of storage and a removable cartridge. As many as 40 manufacturers are integrating the new drive into their systems.

First unveiled at the National Computer Conference in Houston earlier this year and billed as a "low-cost" Winchester, the SyQuest drive was introduced as an add-in for the IBM PC and other computers from a number of manufacturers at COMDEX.

Tecmar, an IBM peripheral manufacturer based in Cleveland, is offering the SyQuest in an internal configuration that uses the existing IBM Personal Computer power supply. The Tecmar drive is priced at $1795. The Tecmar system permits disk sharing for up to four IBM PCs.

Davong Systems of Mountain View, California, is offering the SyQuest drive as a backup system for its external hard disk for $1495.

Jonos, a San Diego portable-computer manufacturer, is also offering a version with the SyQuest drive, and another manufacturer plans to announce it as an add-in for the Osborne computer.

Larry Sarisky, SyQuest vice-president of marketing, said that the key technology in the new drive was a plated medium, called ChromaFlux.

Sarisky said that because the new plating technique was significantly harder than conventional media coatings, the new disk was virtually immune from head crashes. He called the bit density and other design aspects of the new drive "conservative."

The drive is currently a scarce commodity, according to several manufacturers who are integrating it into their systems.

Sarisky said that SyQuest is now producing 25 drive units a day and plans to expand production to 2300 a month by early next month.

The removable cartridge will sell for $50. ■

IBM drops charges against one of its former employees

By Deborah Wise, IW Staff

International Business Machines Corporation amended a suit it filed recently, that asserted three former employees had stolen trade secrets for the IBM Personal Computer, to include charges that two of the defendants had served as consultants to a competitor while they were employed by IBM.

In addition, IBM said it has dropped charges against the third former IBM employee as a result of an out-of-court settlement.

In the initial suit, filed in September, IBM claimed that three employees had tried to sell trade secrets for the IBM Personal Computer and, while they worked for IBM, had formed a company, Bridge Technologies, Inc., to produce competitive products.

IBM's amendment, filed in a New York state court, charges two of the defendants, Lewis C. Eggebrecht and Peter J. Stearns, with acting as paid consultants to Syntrex Inc. of Eatontown, New Jersey, a maker of word-processing equipment. IBM claims Stearns and Eggebrecht gave Syntrex information that it could use to compete with IBM's word-processing products.

IBM dropped charges against William W. Erdman, stating that "Erdman, without admitting liability, has consented to a permanent injunction prohibiting him from revealing or using IBM confidential information or trade secrets."

Erdman also agreed to pay back "a portion of his salary, to make full disclosure to IBM's counsel about his activities with the other defendants, and to testify at the trial," IBM said.

No trial date has been set. ■

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Child experts dispute surgeon general's stance on video games

PITTSBURGH, PA—U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop recently addressed a conference of public-health workers at the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, University of Pittsburgh, on the topic of family violence. After characterizing intrafamily violence as epidemic and citing alarming statistics detailing the high incidence of child abuse, spouse abuse and the abuse of the elderly, Dr. Koop called for "primary prevention programs" jointly sponsored by the Justice Department, local public-health departments and pediatricians. During a news conference following his lecture Koop specifically identified the main contributing factors to intrafamily violence as violence on television, video games and the country's poor economic conditions.

In reference to video games, Koop said that children "are into [the games] body and soul—everything is zapping the enemy. Children get to the point where when they see another child being molested by a third child, they just sit back." Koop implied that children have become accepting of violence.

Regarding the influence of television, Koop stated that "kids are great mimics." He mentioned the violence on TV, and the large amounts of time Americans spend watching TV. To illustrate his "mimicking behavior" theory, he cited the 34 children that became paraplegics as a result of failed attempts to copy the dubious achievements of motorcyclist Evel Knievel, "whose stunts were exhaustively reported by television, complete with slow-motion instant replays." Koop did not link these particular occurrences to family violence, though.

Finally, the surgeon general attributed the tensions produced by the economic situation as also responsible for family violence. "In times of economic distress, there is a higher incidence of child abuse and spouse abuse," he said.

InfoWorld spoke to several child-abuse experts on their reactions to Dr. Koop's comments.

Economic factor

Dr. Judy Martin, Ph.D., head children and youth specialization at the School of Social Work, University of Pittsburgh, and is an author and expert on child abuse.

"It is positive that the surgeon general mentioned the impact of the economy upon the incidence of child abuse. I consider this to be a major factor in the increasing rate of family violence. During these times, both parents experience stress from unemployment, declining purchasing power and the frustrations of being unable to control their future.

"These are times when families cannot purchase such services as private counseling and daycare, thus creating both the probability and opportunity to abuse family members.

"As to TV, there is some research that does indicate that violence on the screen affects behavior, but I know of no research that implicates video games. Of more concern is the general societal acceptance of violence."

Dr. Alexander Zaphiris, J.D., Ed.D., is the associate dean of the School of Social Work at the University of Houston. He is a recognized authority on child abuse and the 1976 winner of the American Humane Association special award for his work on child abuse.

"Media is one of many possible variables identified with the causation of child abuse. Some view violence on TV as an outlet for pressures, and others see it as a reinforcement for the behavior. To consider TV, video games and the economy as the major forces is very restrictive.

"Not having personally played video games but reading of their strategy, they do seem to overly identify with aggressive behavior. Their impact upon family violence is speculative. We must follow these game players through their life cycle to see if they are abusive adults.

"Further, these games are a recent phenomenon of the past two or three years and can not account for the history of family violence."

Gary Koeske, Ph.D., and Randi Koeske, Ph.D., are social psychologists at the University of Pittsburgh who own a home computer.

"The relationship between violence depicted on TV and child behavior has been well researched during the past 20 years. This relationship has been established through experimental research and other designs. While these findings are often extended to cover films, it is premature to consider video games also an example of this relationship.

"There is no empirical knowledge to document that TV and video games are alike in this respect. As parents and scientists we find this to be an interesting question, one that is researchable, but, remember, many games such as adventure games foster the development of logic and problem-solving skills.

Sports more violent

"The question of children becoming immersed in video games may be problematic, but the violence in sports is of more concern than video games. The most foreseeable violence associated with video games occurs when children fight for a turn to play Atari."

Dr. Timothy Burke, M.D., is a psychiatrist in private practice in Louisville, Kentucky. "I am surprised that someone would say this—it may be true, but [video games are] a new factor in

See Child experts, page 15

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Players claim games release, not cause, tension

By Kathy Chin, IW Staff

Reactions to the U.S. surgeon general's claim that video games are a chief cause of family violence were met with disbelief and snickers at the recent Applefest computer convention held in San Francisco.

"I think people generally play games to release tension," said Don Fudge, head programmer at Avant-Garde Creations in Eugene, Oregon. "All those tensions are released in the arcade parlor rather than in the home."

The programmer, however agreed that there are too many games based on greed, suspicion and violence. Fudge, a Vietnam veteran, said it was against his personal philosophy to shoot or harm anyone.

"I would like to see adventure games become more constructive." A possible theme for a game, he suggested, would be "defending the world, instead of destroying it.

"The ideal game is where you never have to shoot first," he said.

Fudge noted that people who do not plug their quarters into game machines might use the money to buy dope and other drugs. "It's a good substitute for bad vices," he said.

U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop stressed that the games make the players impassive to violence.

"When you are glued to the television, you are passive," Fudge continued, "but in playing games, you get involved.

"You never see anyone more involved than in video games. On TV, violence is passive. You are sitting in your living room. In video games, even if you have bad ethics, you make a difference."

"I'm not convinced about what the surgeon general says," commented 24-year-old Joel Billings, president of Strategic Simulations in Mountain View, California. "I don't think video games make you insensitive to violence."

Billings' company produces a variety of adventure games. Some of them are war games, such as Southern Command, Torpedo Fire and the Road to Gettysburg.

"There are pacifists who are wargame players," he stressed. "There are war board games. In the games, you play off the computer, not people."

Billings notes that Strategic Simulation games develop math skills, analytical skills and logic skills, "like chess."

"Video games are only vices if they become addictive. There are worse things," added Billings.

"It doesn't affect me," said Mike McLaren, general manager for Sunnyside Software Distributors in Corvallis, Oregon. "Playing is a release of tension, not a buildup."

McLaren pointed to one game called Arsonist. The object of the game is to burn down as many buildings as you can without getting extinguished by the firemen. A small square on the screen represents the pyromaniac.

According to McLaren, a fire marshal in Oregon is spearheading a campaign to ban Arsonist throughout the state.

McLaren has played the Arsonist game several times, but says that it has not desensitized him to violence. "I don't get that impression. If it is more lifelike, then the impression is more real."

Although children were cautioned about the possible affects of video games upon their family life, they continued to play without any apparent fear or paranoia.

"I don't think it's hazardous," said 17-year-old Richard Beckman, "at least not to my health."

Beckman arrived at Applefest with a busload of students from Santa Cruz [California] High School. "I enjoy those games," he said. "It's only destroying something on the screen."

Thirteen-year-old Vince Monroe plays games one hour per day. "My parents don't mind. I don't feel violent after I play. I feel relaxed." ■

Child experts

continued from preceding page

understanding family violence without any research substantiation. Without a research foundation upon which to base this statement, I am distressed that a prominent person would claim such a relationship.

"The implied relationship between video games and the accepted research on violence on TV is questionable. Most games do not involve characters from reality. There exists some question to this proposed process of personification of such video creatures."

This proposed influence can only account for family violence that has occurred during the last few years since video games appeared. The position of Koop does not account for the fact that most child video junkies are from the middle and upper classes, persons who have the money to play the quarter-a-turn game. Therefore, Koop does not explain the violence that occurs in families without financial means to play these games. ■

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Keynote D takes charge of key and lock security

By Kathy Chin, IW Staff

Last year the University of Rhode Island in Kingston, Rhode Island, had an immediate problem: School officials called the student center an uncontrolled liability because of inadequate key and lock security.

The student center, which houses the university credit union, the student store and other businesses, is operated solely on its profits and does not receive state funding.

With so much money invested in goods and equipment, university leaders turned to management consultant Ed O'Connell, president of Key 1 Computer Systems in Newport, Rhode Island, for a solution.

"I looked around for different systems such as paperwork systems, tagging or marking keys, but nothing seemed to work," he said.

After studying key and lock procedures at various companies, O'Connell noted that corporate heads were embarrassed to find out they had no comprehensive tracking system. At the University of Rhode Island, no one knew who had the keys to the student-union alarm system.

"Out of 30 companies and organizations," he said, "no one had a solution for these keys. One company had 18 security locks but only 12 keys."

This need led to the development of Keynote D, a computerized management program designed to alleviate unnecessary paperwork used for key and lock security.

On the market as of November 1, the $6500 product includes a TRS-80 computer equipped with two disk drives, a printer, software and a manual.

"We want people to deal with security. They should not have to be concerned with computers," he said. O'Connell added that the user would have all the necessary accessories at his fingertips.

Keynote D provides lists of all keys under a master lock, all keys for each room, all holders of a named key and all locks from each manufacturer. Data and functions are on line at all times.

"In a 250-member organization, it's not uncommon to have 1000 locks," he said. "And everything seems to depend on keys; you can have as many as 2800 keys. The information access to the lock system is critical."

The product is geared towards workers in hospitals, colleges, janitorial and security services and defense-contracting firms. He stated that insurance companies have also expressed interest.

With the interactive program, users can issue keys to an employee; switch keys; add new keys to the roster; and label and identify lost keys.

The 16-function menu features eight procedural functions such as retrieve, add or delete and eight utility functions such as list, search and print summaries. Five levels of security access are available for specific needs.

The unit can store memory for up to 2000 locks, 14,000 circulating keys and up to 70 copies of each key.

Keynote D gives simple instructions so that the person at the keyboard does not have to be familiar with computers to use the system. O'Connell suspects that the users will include security operators, building managers and facility engineers.

Key 1 has been in existence for one year and is run by three individuals—a security agent, a computer programmer and O'Connell. "I got involved with computers as a buyer," he said. "As a consultant, I had to spec out computer systems."

"We look at this product from the users' standpoint. We produce the solution and then block out the software. Then, we decide which is the best hardware economically," O'Connell added.

O'Connell is testing similar packages such as fleet-vehicle management, employee-scheduling-forms management and tool control, all designed for schools and businesses.

The next product, according to O'Connell, will be Keynote M. The entire system will be comparable to Keynote D, but will operate on a different computer that has more storage capacity.

The president said corporations that have as many as 1000 keyholders will benefit from his second software offering in January. ■

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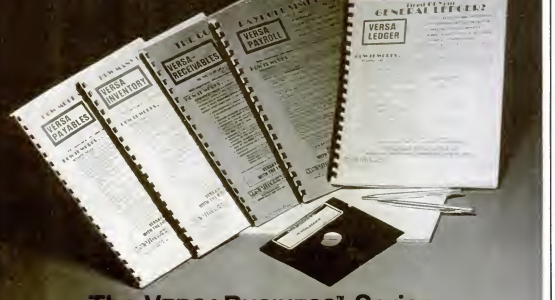

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User Conferences and Workshops: 11 AM to 5 PM

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CP/M '83's Conference and Seminar program will include noted leaders from the industry including Gary Kildall, President, Digital Research Inc.; Sol Libes, Editor, Micro Systems Magazine; Christopher Morgan, Editor-in-Chief, Byte and Popular Computing Magazines; Adam Osborne, President, Osborne Computer Corporation; Tony Gold, Founder CP/M Users Group and Liteboat Associates; Ben Rosen, President, Rosen Research; Portia Isaacson, President, Future Computing; Maggie Cannon, Editor in Chief, Info-World; David Crockett, Senior Vice-President, Dataquest; and Gordon Eubanks, Vice-President Language Div., Digital Research. CP/M '83's conference, seminar and workshop program is designed for computer tradespeople and users. These individuals, plus dozens of others, will conduct informative discussions exploring CP/M applications, technical information, development aids, venture capital programs and software distribution. End user workshops will show users how to get the most from their CP/M computer.

Low Hotel Rates
CP/M '83's Show Management has made special group discount arrangements with several of the hotels closest to Moscone Center.
The Hyatt on Union Square—415-398-1234—345 Stockton St.—new, modern, and four blocks from Moscone. CP/M '83's discount rates are $75 per night single, $85 per night double, versus their regular rates of $95 to $130 single and $130 to $165 double.

The Sheraton Palace Hotel—415-392-8600—639 Market St.—elegantly refurbished fine older hotel, and the closest hotel to Moscone—only one block. CP/M '83's special rates are $70 single and $80 double, versus their regular rates of approximately $90 single and $100 double.

The San Francisco Hilton & Tower—415-771-1400—333 O'Farrell St.—a modern facility located three blocks from the Show. CP/M '83's special rates are $75 per night single and $95 double, versus this Hilton's regular rates of $66 to $127 single, and $86 to $147 double.

The Holiday Inn on Union Square—415-398-8900—480 Sutter St.—a modern facility with all the conveniences, and located in the heart of San Francisco. This facility offers CP/M '83 attendees accommodations for $70 per night single and $80 per night double.

The Holiday Inn Financial District/China Town—415-433-6600—750 Kearny St.—this high rise Inn is six easy blocks to Moscone and offers CP/M '83's attendees single or double accommodation at $55 per night versus their regular rates of $78 to $92.

The Pickwick Hotel—415-421-7500—85 5th St.—Just two blocks from the Show, this fine hotel has clean modest accommodations, and is offering CP/M '83's attendees rates which are lower than motel rates. The rates are $30 per night single and $35 per night double, and can't be beat anywhere in town.

Hotel Reservation Request

1. For you to receive CP/M '83's special discount convention rates, all reservations must be made on this form, or a facsimile. The form must be completed in detail, including date and hour of arrival, date of departure, and names and addresses of all persons who will occupy the room. Reservations can not be processed without this information.
2. Indicate at least three choices of hotels and rates. Requested rates cannot be guaranteed, but the Housing Bureau will make every attempt to assign rooms as near as possible to the requested rate.
3. The Housing Bureau requires written reservations. Only late requests, after Friday, January 7, will be accepted by telephone. After Friday, January 14 try to make your reservations directly with the hotel, but be advised that the hotels are expected to be full by that time. The Housing Bureau telephone number is 415-626-5500.
4. Mail this hotel reservation request directly to CP/M '83 Housing Bureau, P.O. Box 5612, San Francisco, CA 94101, and *not* to National Computer Shows.
5. Confirmations will be sent from the Housing Bureau up to two weeks prior to the event. Allow up to two weeks for processing.
6. Cancellations. Notify the CP/M '83 Housing Bureau of all cancellations up to Friday, January 7. After January 7, make cancellations directly with the hotel. Changes. All other changes, such as arrival or departure times or changes in type of accommodations required, should be made directly with the hotels at all times.
7. Hotels will hold reservations only until 6 pm unless otherwise requested. If you are delayed in transit, phone ahead and advise the hotel of your arrival time. Reservations can be guaranteed to assure a room regardless of arrival time. However, if you do not pick up or cancel the reservation, you will be billed for one night's room rate. If you make a reservation, even a guaranteed reservation, it will be held only for that night. Thus, if you designate a Monday arrival and do not arrive until Tuesday, you will not have a room unless you notify the hotel beforehand.

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Show & Conference Preregistration Request

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2. All preregistration requests must be received by Friday, January 14, 1983. No telephone or credit card orders can be processed.
3. Use a separate form for each person preregistering for a three day badge.
4. Badges and tickets will be mailed back to preregistrants, providing the order is received by Friday, January 7. For orders received after that date, badges and tickets will be held for pick-up at the preregistration desk at the Show.
5. It is recommended that attendees preregister. However, it is not necessary, as badges and tickets can be purchased at the Show.
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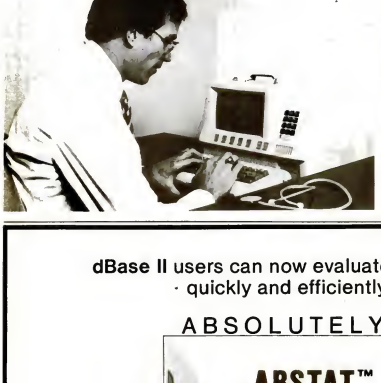

New communications system bundles data and voice abilities

By John Markoff, IW Staff

Futurists like to claim that the blending of computer and communications technologies will take place during the next decade.

Basic Telecommunications Corporation of Fort Collins, Colorado, has attempted to get the jump on some corporate giants by designing a CRT terminal that incorporates both voice and data capabilities.

The DataVoice Desk Top Communications System bundles together a telephone, modem, CRT and standard QWERTY keyboard to provide office workers with the capabilities of both data and voice technologies.

DataVoice includes CRT, keyboard, telephone, modem, tape recorder

The system offers RS-232 and printer ports, clock and calendar with battery backup, auto-dialer and a tape recorder for voice messaging. Basic Telecommunications states that the DataVoice can automatically send and receive both voice and electronic mail.

Another DataVoice feature is a calendar that allows the user to keep records of meetings and appointments.

Additionally, the DataVoice has many of the capabilities of an intelligent telephone, including automatic dialing, a phone-number directory, redialer, auto-answer and speed dialing.

Examining the DataVoice gives the distinct impression that there's everything here but the kitchen sink.

In fact, the sink—or its equivalent—will be added soon. According to Chet Stephens, a marketing vice-president at Basic Telecommunications, a Z80 microcomputer will soon be added to the system to offer stand-alone computing capabilities.

As it is available now, DataVoice takes up roughly as much space as an office typewriter.

Basic Telecommunications also produces a telephone for the disabled, called the AbilityPhone. This is a microprocessor-based terminal that serves as both a communications device and an "environmental-control device." It is designed to offer more independence for the disabled.

The AbilityPhone offers automatic answering, auto-dialing and redialing. There is also an optional voice synthesizer that can speak all keyboard and index items.

With the voice option, the AbilityPhone terminal can transmit a spoken emergency message or be programmed to periodically check on the user by asking, "Are you okay?" If there is no response within a specified time, the system automatically sends an emergency message.

The AbilityPhone comes with a 32-character display that can show dialing operations or index items. ■

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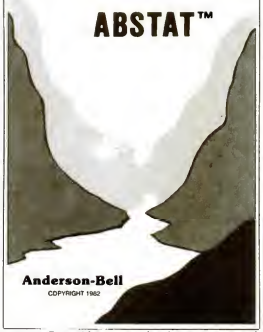

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New directory shows growth, diversity in videotex industry

By John Markoff, IW Staff

MENLO PARK, CA—Do you want to know what the Kuwaitis are planning to develop in videotex technology? Or how about Czechoslovakia or Venezuela?

If you do, or even if you're only interested in knowing which domestic manufacturers are involved in videotex trials, then you may be interested in the *1982-83 Videotex Directory*, recently introduced as a joint publishing effort by The Institute For the Future, based in Menlo Park, California; and Arlen Communications, located in Bethesda, Maryland.

Priced at $150, the directory isn't

See Directory, page 20

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Prices quoted are for stock on hand and are subject to change without notice.

Directory

continued from page 18

cheap, but it does give some indication of the widespread corporate and organizational interest in the videotex industry.

The directory is broken down into categories including system operators, hardware/software vendors, government agencies, trade associations, consultants and publications.

The new directory grew out of research and consulting that the Institute for the Future has been doing in the area of interactive communications.

"On the surface, it appears that not much is happening in videotex," says Richard Adler, a research associate at the Institute and one of the directory authors. Underneath, however, there is a tremendous degree of interest on the part of a diverse group of corporations," he adds.

Adler says the new developments in videotex technology have led to a widespread attempt by different corporations to poach on each other's traditional areas of business.

"Everybody suddenly realizes that they can get into everyone else's business," he says.

The outcome of the battle still isn't clear, however. "There are lots of joint ventures," Adler says, "but there are no sure winners and no one is sure how the pie will be sliced."

The state of the videotex industry is in such flux that Adler thinks that a decade from now the very name of the infant industry may have disappeared.

"It may be like the term 'wireless radio,'" he says, "in the 20s that term had connotations of the future, but who has heard the term *wireless* today?"

Oh, and incidentally, according to the directory, earlier this year the Kuwaitis sought proposals to establish a 2500-terminal, two-year videotex trial in the Middle East. Information will be stored and entered into the system in both English and Arabic, and individual videotex pages will be able to handle script in both languages. ■

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Test strategies for solving the cube by video-game simulation

I can recommend **The Programmable Cube** from Metacomet Software as an excellent tool for testing Rubik's Cube strategies, although not as a substitute for the cube itself.

Indeed, the program contains an excellent visual and functional simulation of the cube. A color or patterned black-and-white cube rolls about on the screen in response to simple typed commands, which include elementary cube operations such as 90°, 180° and 270° turns, rotations of the entire cube about its three axes and slice moves, as well as complex user-defined moves built from these primitive operations.

All six sides of the cube are continuously visible via three simulated mirrors behind the simulated cube.

There are commands to scramble the cube and to undo the last move, and there is a setup mode for specifying the color of every cube face individually. (The program rejects some, though perhaps not all, impossible configurations.)

The writers of the program have also included a functional simulation of a dime—the tool I use to pry the cube apart when I want to start over—although they don't call it that.

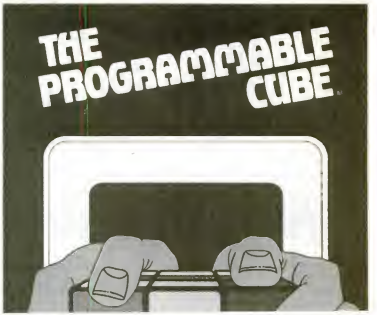
The Programmable Cube, in fact, incorporates an extensible programming language, which you can use to define new cube operations, using a Pascal-like syntax and pattern-matching techniques. It is the pattern-matching ability that brings the program into the domain of heuristic artificial-intelligence software tools. The program includes an editor and generates disk files compatible with the Apple Pascal editor and filer.

An important feature is the Solve command, which the authors believe is a complete cube solver. The Solve command is not terribly insightful, and takes approximately the same amount of time (approximately 15 minutes) to solve most of the problems I set it, some of which were among the first special-case problems a human solver would learn.

I was amused to see that, in one problem with three cubes out of place, the program spent the first three minutes turning the cube over and over in its "hands," apparently studying it, before making a single unscrambling move.

The authors supply the source code for this solver, along with a single-step mode that allows you to study the operation of the solver at your own pace. This single-step mode also works with any program you write.

The Programmable Cube cannot teach your fingers the dexterity of a champion cubist, nor does it supply the satisfactory tactile feedback of the real Rubik's Cube, but it is indeed programmable, and is a worthwhile tool for the Cubic strategist.—Usasi



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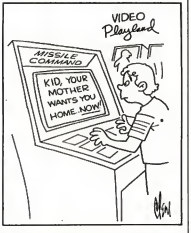

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Defeat Landgrabbers, hurdle cannonballs, trap mice

The amusing cartoon on the package of **Flockland Island Crisis** from Vital Information of Overland Park, Kansas, shows a shepherd desperately protecting his sheep as invaders grab at the land under his feet. "Get the flock out of here," he shouts.

It's nice to find a programmer who has a sense of humor. Flockland Island Crisis is amusing.

The simple but pleasant color graphics show a narrow island, running from the top to the bottom of the screen, at the beginning of the game.

Flockland Islander shelters sheep

Your goal is to protect Flockland Island from the Landgrabbers who are seeking to take tons of Petrolanolinwealthurnium back to their home country, wherever that may be.

The Landgrabbers aren't an invincible armada. In fact, I was pleased to discover that after a half hour of play I had achieved one of the top five scores in the game. Considering that a bunch of proficient 14-year-olds played my review copy of the game for several weeks to rack up their high scores, my respectably high score is no small achievement.

Nevertheless, defending Flockland Island is not as easy as it sounds. The Landgrabbers come from both east and west simultaneously, so you need a good deal of coordination to successfully move and fire the OIDS (Orbiting Island Defense System) missiles successfully.

To move the left OIDS missile you press the Q key (moves missile up); pressing the A key moves it down. You control the right missile with the P and L keys, and fire OIDS quotons on either side by banging the space bar. The missile that fires is the one you most recently moved.

As I said before, I did well in this game. It took me no time to beat the highest score—a score that was registered by the programmer Kevin Bagley. Nevertheless, as is the case with most arcade games, and all wars, you can't win this one. The Landgrabbers must have wealthy allies, because they don't run out of ammunition until they manage to take five shiploads of valuable island soil and scatter thousands of sheep to the hills.

The action of this game comes from the old Space Invaders mold: They attack and you fire. By pressing the Escape key, you can stop the action. Flockland Island Crisis is an enjoyable game, though at $34.95 I wonder if it can keep your interest long enough to merit the price tag.—Alberto Adorno

On-Line Systems calls **CannonBall Blitz**, "a revolutionary new arcade game"—your usual case of company hype. Actually, this is an enjoyable game, and since it is difficult to master—none of the arcadians have made it all the way through the second level—it may be worth acquiring.

I don't play the quarter arcades often, but I understand that this game is modeled after the popular Donkey Kong. You are a rebel soldier and you must climb Nutcracker Hill. That would be easy but for the obstructions on the way. First there are cannonballs, dozens of them, moving so rapidly that it's easy to trip over them

See Cannonball Blitz, page 26

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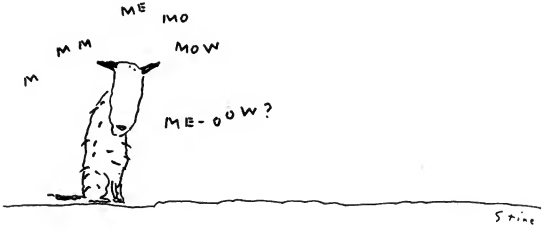

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Cannonball Blitz

continued from page 23

rather than to press the space bar so you can leap in time to avoid them.

You have two ways of getting to the top of the hill. The longer path is to follow the trail until you get to a plank that propels you to the next floor by functioning as a seesaw when a cannonball falls on the other end of it. You move horizontally by pressing the arrow keys and you jump over the cannonballs by banging on the space bar. Luckily, the Apple keyboard withstands such punishment.

You can also use the joystick to control your movement throughout the game.

If you get tired of making your way to the top, floor by floor, you can take your chances by hopping up and grabbing a balloon that flies by from time to time. The risk is that before the balloon manages to take you to the top so you can start level two, a cannonball might fall on it and crush you.

Level two is more difficult. So tough, in fact, that I don't have much to say except good luck when you get there. The documentation for the game inadequately describes what you must do to make it through this level.

Level two has several floors. Cannons roll across each level, seeking to run you over or shoot you. You can avoid them by leaping over them—although it's a tougher jump than the one over the cannonballs—or you can get out of their way by climbing a ladder to the next floor. The instructions also say you can destroy the cannons with a hammer, but they don't say where you find the hammer or how to operate it.

Of level three, I only know that the mission, again, is to capture the enemy and that this time there are elevators to assist you in the climb to the top.

I recommend this game to the persistent player who is willing to play for hours to master each level. This is a frustrating game, even though it's fun.—Alberto Adorno

Mouskattack from On-Line Systems may be better than Pac-Man—it's that good.

It doesn't need a long description. You play the part of a plumber and you must lay pipes throughout a house by quickly moving through a mazelike screen. You can move by programming the keys to control your direction or by using the joystick. I prefer to use the keyboard for quicker response.

While you are putting in the pipes, a bunch of mice are eating away at them, turning them a light gray color. To stop the mice, you can pick up a cat and place it near the mice. There are also mouse traps. If you pass over a trapped mouse, you collect points and remove it temporarily from play. If you run into a mouse, though, you lose.

Once you've managed to lay all the pipes, you move on to the next level. Naturally, it gets more difficult each time around. At one level, there is a supermouse that cannot be destroyed.

Ken Williams and Al Nystrom get a loud bravo from me for this game, which includes a musical introduction, albeit a rather disturbing digital rendition of—you guessed it—"Three Blind Mice."—Alberto Adorno

Bugs bug Bug Battle game reviewer

Bug Battle from United Software of America in New York City is a Centipede-like game without the action or flair of Cavalier's Bug Attack and without the graphics of the original Centipede.

To make matters worse, the game has a bug (a computer-type bug, that is).

To play the game, a player fires his pest-killing laser at flesh-eating caterpillars and lethal blue-widow spiders. This is done by moving the gun left to right and up and down. The up-and-down movement is restricted to about one-fourth of the garden plot (the bottom fourth). This is similar to the trackball version of Centipede.

The player has to shoot a bunch of green plants, which are supposedly deadly Amazon Skram weeds planted by the jealous neighbor next door. If you shoot the neighbor, you get 500 points.

I quickly determined that if I positioned myself in the upper left-hand corner of my maneuvering area and I had a plant anywhere to my right, I could put the gun on automatic fire and rack up an infinite score. The spider would never show up unless I moved, the bugs would all fall below me and wander aimlessly, the farmer (if he was sowing in an upper quadrant) would get shot often, and so would the caterpillar.

I left the game unattended for 30 minutes, during which time it racked up 250,000 points.

I noticed another bug (or at least a flaw) during this period.

After you collect a total of nine lives (you get one for every 10,000 points), it stops rewarding you. I received no new lives between 100,000 and 250,000 points. Obviously, the programmers didn't anticipate my high scores.

One positive thing about the game is that it only costs $22.50. Other than that, I think you'll be a little bored.—Palmer D. Quinlan

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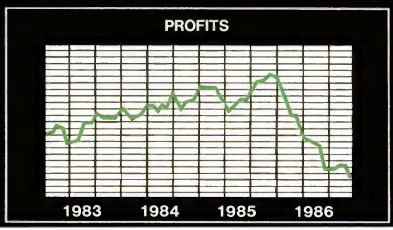

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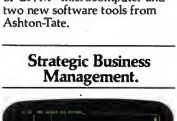

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Shoot cannonballs, carnival creatures with games for Apple

Automated Simulations **Ricochet** is not arcade-speed or -quality, but it is an interesting game for the Apple II that makes you think. You compete against the computer or other players to score points by using your supply of cannonballs to hit various blocks on a grid, by striking bonus targets at each side of the screen or by stuffing an opponent's cannon.

When the game begins, each side has six blocks laid out evenly, much like the balls in a pool rack. During your turn, you have the choice of moving any number of your blocks in one direction or firing one cannonball from either an upper or lower cannon on your side. Some block moves are impossible since you cannot leapfrog blocks past one another or on top of one another.

Sample game screen of Ricochet, after two players have begun playing.

All cannonballs fired travel diagonally. When a cannonball strikes a block, the block is turned 90°, pivoting on a point in the central grid. The cannonball is deflected away from the direction it came and can then bounce off other blocks or off the top or bottom of the screen. It keeps bouncing until it stuffs a cannon or finds a blank exit on the sides.

The ducks, upon reaching the bottom row, give out loud quacks and move menacingly close to you.

What makes Ricochet interesting is trying to figure out where your cannonball or an opponent's ball will go once it is fired. Some trajectories can be quite involved, and you can stuff your own cannons with your own cannonballs. Your projectiles can also strike your own bonus targets and give your opponent the resulting points.

Ricochet takes a minute or so to load and then asks you if you want to play against the Apple II or a human opponent. If you pick the human opponent, it asks each player to enter a rating. Apparently Ricochet accepts any response to this question, but it's not clear what the computer does with it.

If you play the Apple II, Ricochet asks you for your rating only. Start with a rating of 0—it's safe.

You can also select one of five different games. Some start with more side targets and possibly a roving extra ball target. You can also opt for fast or slow ball movement. The latter is more tedious but lets you study the trajectories a bit more.

The keyboard controls used for moving and firing are Up, Down, Left, Right, Top or Bottom. The last two determine which of your cannons fires. When you want to move your blocks, you press either *M* or *V*. In a two-player game, *M* causes letters to appear on the left-hand blocks, and V causes right-hand block letters to appear. After selecting a direction, you can select the block's letter and have it move in that direction. Pressing the space bar ends a movement session.

I was most fascinated by the "thinking" the program does while contemplating a move in the single-player game. If you take too long—two minutes or so—to make a move, the computer penalizes you by giving itself a point. But if the computer cannot generate its own next move within a few seconds, after much thinking and beeping, it docks itself a point, then

See Ricochet, page 29

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Ricochet

continued from page 27

continues ruminating. It's quite odd.

As for what goes through the program's brain when it plans a move, who knows? Sometimes I was able to beat the computer handily, and other times it made me look like a dunderhead. This is not the usual sort of thing a computer game does to your mind.

I did notice the computer had an uncanny knack for finding ways to hit the extra ball target, but I never could.

The game ends when one side has no cannonballs left to fire. There are about four games in a match, and each time the previous winner has some new handicap—either his own target is worth a lot more than his opponent's, or the number of the opponent's targets is reduced, or both.

After each game, the computer awards points to both sides based on the points scored in the last game. The winner is the one with the most match points. At the end of the match, the computer then produces ratings for the "humans" (as the game calls them), and you are free to try again.

I wish they would add a feature to turn the sound off, though. It's grating, and it made it hard for me to think. This is one game where you need to think.—Allen Gibson

Data Most's **County Fair** for the Apple II, written by Dan Illovsky, conjures up memories of carnival sawdust, cotton candy and dozens of "try your skill" games that I could never win when I was a kid.

The object is to score points by hitting targets that move back and forth in four rows. The furthest row back is behind a barrier that has only two small openings.

You have a "gun" and a limited number of bullets and can move and fire with the joystick, paddle or keyboard. All the standard denizens of carnival hunting games are here: owls, rabbits and ducks, as well as trees and beach balls.

Bullet gobblers

As with most good video games, the power of the computer adds something extra. The ducks, upon reaching the bottom row, give out loud quacks and move menacingly close to you. If you don't shoot them in time, they disappear and a little duck-icon gobbles some of your remaining bullets.

If you finish shooting everything on the screen, you enter a bonus round where you get ten points every time you hit a solitary duck flying back and forth. The catch is you have about one chance to hit the duck before he flies off the screen, and every time you hit him he reverses direction, flying higher and higher and faster and faster. It's a challenging exercise of your reflexes.

To add extra spice, small symbols appear in front of the rear barrier. If you hit these symbols, they add to or subtract a certain number of bullets from your inventory. The negative ones have a habit of appearing in front of the small openings to the fourth row of targets.

The game ends when you run out of bullets.—Allen Gibson

Arcade-game imitators lack realism

Nothing is more disappointing than a personal-computer video game that doesn't live up to the arcade game that it imitates.

Both Tunnel Terror (from Adventure International of Longwood, Florida) and Asteroid Field (from Cavalier Software), both for the Apple Computer, fall victim to this failing.

Tunnel Terror is a poor attempt at copying Atari's Tempest arcade game, one of the best of the genre. Tempest gets the adrenaline pumping better than anything—except, perhaps, going 6X in Missile Command. And with a dizzying three-dimensional fall into a vortex, Tempest offers almost hallucinatory graphics at mind-boggling speed.

Unfortunately, Tunnel Terror does none of this. It gives the player only a paltry imitation composed of a couple of lines that imitate a vortex and some kind of visual "bug" that swings around the screen.

As in Tempest, the object is to destroy all of the objects hurtling up from the center of the screen before they get you.

All I got out of this game was a sore thumb.

Asteroid Field, which prominently notes that it has been licensed from Atari, is closer to its original. Given the limits of the Apple's screen resolution, the graphics are commendable and fast.

For those of us who nostalgically remember Space War, the original father of the video-arcade craze that once haunted many mainframes and minicomputers, however, Asteroid Field lacks some key realistic aspects, such as the factoring in of gravitational effects.

Overall, Asteroid Field is a good try and with a little more resolution it would be an excellent game, for those of you who weren't already bored by Asteroids two or three years ago.—David Westerby

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Sir, this chart shows the 430-member crew by name; rank; location on board; health, strength and morale factors; special skills; objects carried or worn; and crewman specialty.

Our crew is divided into sixteen security groups, nine repair groups and three command-control teams (up to ten crewmen each). By the way, Captain Kirk can form eight more groups of any one kind and command them to go to whatever part of the ship they are most needed.

Let us go to Deck 16, which contains the medical section and warp-drive engineering. By the way, the *Enterprise* is powered by two main warp engines and four impulse engines and is protected by eight separate deflector shields that can be rotated in six directions for maximum protection.

Sir, let me show you the medical section. We have three intensive-care units that can handle up to five critical patients at one time. Please allow me to show . . .

RED ALERT! RED ALERT! RED ALERT!

Sir, we must return immediately to the bridge. A Klingon vessel is nearby and ready to attack!!!!

With the above narrative, I have tried to describe the intricate detail of this Star Trek simulation. I have given only a small taste of all the facets.

Diagram of the bridge of the USS Enterprise, *from the blueprint map*

Star Trek Colossus is an interactive system of 25 chained programs and 17 disk files. It comes with extensive documentation on a separate rules disk.

You play the game itself with a command list, a menu of 24 ship commands. You have complete helm control to pilot the ship—destination, intercept and manual helm-control modes. Between moves, a strategic display consisting of a grid map of 100 cubic sectors (one-tenth of a quadrant) with star systems and vessels appears on the screen.

Insignificant images

The program's attempts to display maps and Klingon battle cruisers falls far short of being a significant feature, since only keyboard characters are used to form these images.

To play the game, you simply enter a 0 on the menu screen and wait for the program to give the *Enterprise*'s location, at which point you have helm control. After you have entered the new instruction, the menu screen again appears and you are ready to enter one of the 24 commands, if you wish, and take another turn.

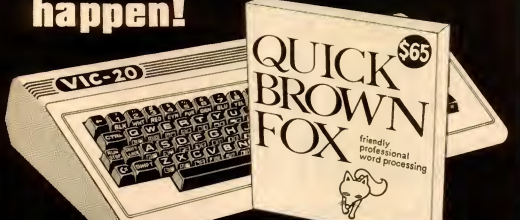
Let me warn you that each turn accesses the disk and so takes a considerable amount of time. In one hour, I was only able to take 16 turns. To me, that is an unacceptable situation and takes all the fun out of the game.

Star Trek Colossus requires a North Star Horizon II (double density) with 32K of RAM and any 80 × 24-line terminal. The requirements do not mention a printer, but you must have a printer since the rules are on disk and you need to learn and study them before you can effectively play the game.

The game costs $69.99, which is a bit much for a game, even a game as intricate as this one. Many Star Trek games are in the public domain and available from local users' groups.

One final word of caution: The instructions to run the program and the rules disk are short and leave a lot to be desired. You should have a thorough knowledge of your North Star system to run this program.—Rolf Hille

We made the $2000 BREAKTHROUGH happen!



WP Milestone: Full Features at 'Smart' Typewriter Prices!

NEW YORK...*1983 will be the year of the Fox," said QBF exec Joe Ming as he unveiled the $65 Quick Brown Fox word processing program.

"$65 for Word.star-level word processing software is real news, but it's only part of the story," said Ming. "The real news is that 1983 is the year that the Quick Brown Fox made it possible to have a real word processor for less than $2000."

"We sell only the Quick Brown Fox software," Ming emphasized. "But we can show anyone how to put together VIC-20 or Commodore 64 WP systems with a total cost from as little as $700 up to only $1830 for 'real' word processing."

What's "real" word processing? Ming said that full-featured word processing means pro software like Quick Brown Fox, letter-quality printing, 80-column display, added memory, and disk storage.

A "student" VIC/Quick Brown Fox system with no extra memory, a draft-quality printer plus cassette would tilt the scales at less than $700 using discounted VIC prices. And that includes the computer!

All that is available now in the sub-$2000 range of letter quality word processors are intelligent typewriters with one or two line displays, very little internal storage, and external storage (if any) on cassette tape.

"Frankly," said Ming, "if anyone buys a 'smart' typewriter after today, they probably aren't too smart."

At QBF/CBM prices, one could even add two or three QBF/CBM work stations for the cost of a Lanier or Wang work station!"

QBF's free brochure shows how to get a professional word processor system for less than $2000. The brochure also shows how to make up "starter" systems. QBF is really capitalizing on recent events in the Commodore world: widespread price cutting, new 80-column boards, and the arrival of sub-$700 letter quality printers.

Quick Brown Fox uses an approach to editing that is not cursor-oriented. This means that the Fox will work even on a "stock" (22 column) VIC-20 or Commodore 64. Quick Brown Fox will work with any width display, taking advantage of recently released 40/80 column boards.

Quick Brown Fox and VIC-20 actually costs less than the Word.star alone, the current standard of word processing software. But how does QBF look when compared to venerable, old, Word.star?

In the feature race, Word.star loses the comparison. QBF has many unexpected features such as proportional spacing (on WP printers), an easy "fill in the blank" command (Dear Sir: You owe us ...), plus any-format boilerplating for form letters.

The biggest advantage over Word.star, said Ming, is that QBF automatically reformats edited text...this becomes a tedious paragraph-by-paragraph operation with Word.star. "With the Fox," Ming bragged, "you process words...you don't just play with the word processor."

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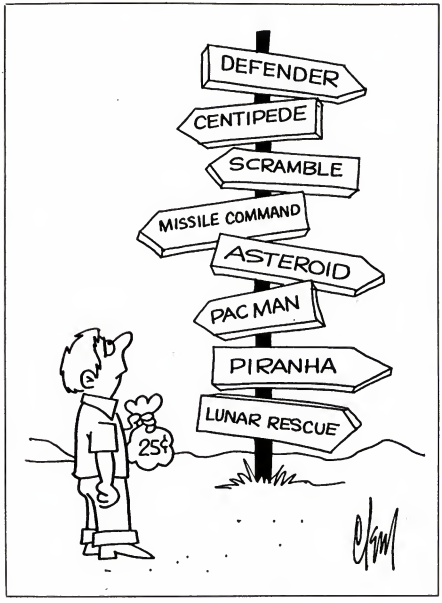
Electronic Christmas, Zappy New Year



By Scott Mace, IW Staff

This 1982 holiday season, more than any before it, belongs to video games.

Video monsters are flying, plodding, slithering, crawling, teleporting and invading on TV screens across America. Video games excite, provoke, annoy, offend, teach, hypnotize, bore, amuse, addict, occupy and dazzle us as never before.

This Christmas all the major players are on the field. The old-timers, such as Atari, Activision and Magnavox, are up against the upstarts such as Vectrex and ColecoVision. Atari, determined to hold on to its dominant share of the video-game market, released games based on the hit movies *E.T.* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* with a publicity campaign far larger than the one that launched Pac-Man last Christmas.

Even the movie studios are getting into the act, realizing that millions would rather zap homegrown baddies than go to the movies. Ahead of the others is 20th Century-Fox, with games based on its movies *Mega Force* and *Alien*. Paramount and other studios are not far behind.

The television networks, not immune to being tuned out in favor of a good game, are also in the act. This year CBS acquired a line of games from K-Byte for the Atari 400 and 800 computers and launched CBS Software.

Many companies realize that a line of game software can build the name recognition needed later for other kinds of home-computer software, such as telecommunications, banking or education.

The video game also had a large impact on the toy industry in the last year. Sales of traditional toys have sagged, as parents and kids alike poured their discretionary money into video games. Companies that did not enter the video-game market, such as Tonka, are not doing as well as such companies as Milton Bradley or Mattel, which have heavily invested in hardware or software.

As a partial response, traditional games such as Monopoly are now appearing in electronic versions that speed up play. In Parker Brothers' Mo-

See New year, page 32

New year

continued from preceding page

nopoly Playmaster, the small computer rolls the dice, auctions off unowned property and plays short jingles, such as "I've Been Working on the Railroad," when a player lands on a railroad square.

Whole companies owe their existence to video games. Nolan Bushnell, founder of Atari and developer of Pong, one of the first video games, went on to start Pizza Time Theatre, a chain of combination pizza parlors and video arcades that opened its 200th parlor last month in Hong Kong.

In a phone interview, Bushnell told *InfoWorld* that Pizza Time Theatre will introduce some homegrown educational video games early next year for children between the ages of five and eight. The games will be smaller than the regular arcade games, Bushnell said, and they will teach abstract concepts such as direction and motion. The games will also give youngsters experience with controlling menu programs.

Among the games Pizza Time will release are a safety game, code-named Mary Goes Home From School, that teaches children how to cross the street and obey traffic lights; reading games and number games, based on material typically presented on a "Sesame Street"-type show. The games will not have a CRT, but will rely instead on a touch-sensitive glass screen, with illuminated messages, controlled by the game computer. Game winners will receive tickets redeemable for prizes and food.

Bushnell is under agreement not to compete with the company he started, Atari, until a specific day and hour in October 1983. He is, though, clearly ready to reenter that area as soon as he is allowed. Among the hot trends Bushnell sees in regular video games this year is the story game, such as Donkey Kong, where a hapless little guy must rescue a maiden from a giant gorilla.

Flooded arcades

The flood of new games entering arcade parlors continues; even with dedicated microprocessor power and graphics, few home video games can come close to the action in the arcades.

Nevertheless, industry watchers notice that this year arcade machines have penetrated just about every nook and cranny they can. Recently, a high school in San Jose, California, installed a few arcade machines in an empty classroom to raise some money for the school during lunchtime.

In the meantime, the debate over controlling the use and placement of arcade games continues unabated, with neither government nor the game manufacturers themselves policing the situation.

Many observers consider this Christmas the high-water mark for dedicated video-game systems. Some predict the new machines—such as

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the Z80-based ColecoVision game machine, built by Coleco Industries of Hartford, Connecticut; or Milton Bradley's raster-graphics-based Vectrex with built-in video screen—are the last gasp of an industry soon to be swallowed whole by low-cost personal computers.

Indeed, Commodore is spending millions of advertising dollars to sell its VIC 20 computers by hammering home one message this Christmas: "Why spend more for a game machine when you can have a computer for less?"

Despite this, new game machines continue to appear, such as the Atari 5200, an upgraded home-video system. Radio Shack, based in Fort Worth, Texas, has even thrown its cowboy hat into the ring with Tandyvision One, a Mattel Intellivision-compatible system with 16-bit microprocessor. Still, at a suggested retail price of $249.95, the machine costs $50 more than a TI Home Computer or a VIC 20.

Weathering the shakeout

Some video-game makers hope to weather any coming shakeout by offering upgrades to turn the game machines into home computers.

The ColecoVision uses the Z80 microprocessor, which is at the heart of many CP/M computers. A plug-in keyboard and printer are in the works for 1983, according to the company. Many consumers may balk, however, remembering the unfulfilled promises of the original Intellivision machine, which never turned into an economical home computer.

Mattel has continued to promote the Intellivision game machine through its series of M Network game cartridges. The Los Angeles-based toy company is getting closer to releasing its own full-blown personal computer.

This Christmas, Mattel introduced the Teach & Learn Computer, a portable education tutor with cartridges that quiz 6- through 11-year-olds on memory and logic, spelling, reading, nutrition, geography and programming using a version of BASIC called KIDBASIC.

The computer comes with its own LCD-based screen and keyboard overlays for each cartridge, instead of the usual QWERTY arrangement. In large national ads, Mattel has promised parents "a smarter kid in 60 days or your money back."

Both the Intellivision and Magnavox's Odyssey II game machine feature speech synthesis, and reportedly Magnavox will program its machine so users can audibly reproduce anything using the Odyssey II's QWERTY keyboard. The Atari 5200 will have a voice synthesizer by the end of 1983, as well.

Radio-maker Emerson hopes to combat the $99 Timex personal computer and the VIC with Arcadia 2000, a game machine that will sell for less than $100.

Whether companies survive the inevitable video-game shakeout or not, the video game will live on as a fixture in many homes for years to come. Such a phenomenon is attracting serious study. On December 3, New York's Columbia University and Atari Research cosponsored a day devoted to such a discussion called "Video Games: Serious Business?"

Speakers included Chris Crawford, a famous video-game designer and manager of the Games Research Group at Atari; Steve Mayer, chief inventor of the Atari home video-game system as well as the Atari 400 and 800 home-computer systems; and Warren Robinett, cocreator of one of the most startling video games this year, Rocky's Boots by The Learning Company, where children use joysticks to create machines using Boolean logic.

What kinds of games can personal-computer owners expect in the coming year? A few weeks ago, the top game on distributor Softsel's best-seller list was Broderbund's Choplifter, a helicopter-rescue game for the Apple II computer that has both old and new elements.

Choplifter maintains the traditional shoot-em-up spirit with flying bombs and heat-seeking missiles. At the same time, the player's mission is one of mercy, as the helicopter tries to rescue as many hostages as possible.

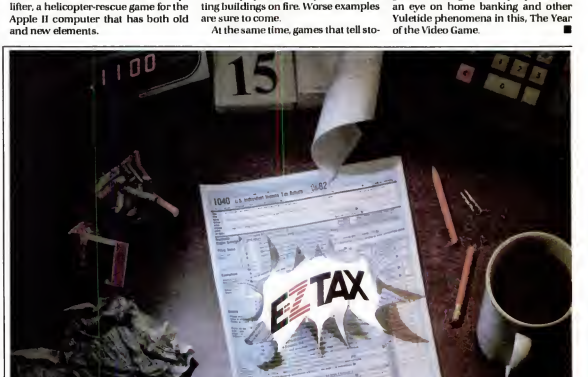
The number 2 game on Softsel's best-seller list was Sierra On-Line's version of the popular arcade game Frogger, where the object is merely to survive without the aid of any offensive weapons.

Does this mean the days of excessive violence in video games are through? Probably not. Recently, a video game called Arson made its debut—players receive points for setting buildings on fire. Worse examples are sure to come.

At the same time, games that tell stories and educate are on the rise. In Space Knights, a game published this year by Reston Publishing Company, the arcade-style and educational games are centered around an original science-fiction novel for children, written by David Heller and illustrated by Frank Cirocco and Al Gordon.

The games in Space Knights allow players to experience the adventures of the novel's main characters, while players learn vector algebra in order to travel.

Elsewhere in this issue, our writers look at new video-game watches, the U.S. surgeon general's attack on video games, a new game company that has an eye on home banking and other Yuletide phenomena in this, The Year of the Video Game. ■



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Casinos add computer power to one-armed bandits

By Michael Wiesenberg

Computers are becoming part of more and more activities, including gambling. In the mid-60s, electronic blackjack machines first appeared in the casinos of Nevada; the popularity of video gaming devices began in the late 70s with video slot machines that had spinning pictures on the screen of the fruits, bells and jackpot symbols.

Soon other games were computerized, and now the casinos of Nevada and Atlantic City offer, in addition to "traditional" reel-type video slot machines, rows of video-poker slot machines, video dice games, video keno (complete with light pens to mark numbers bet on simulated keno layouts), video blackjack and others.

The larger casinos have around 1000 slot machines each; as many as 15% of these are video gaming devices. The most popular of these are the linked progressive-jackpot video slot machines, either of the poker variety or simulated spinning reels.

A penny per dollar

On progressive-jackpot machines, one or two cents are added to a progressive jackpot for each dollar played. The jackpot might typically start at $10,000 and increase to as much as $1 million. Several of these machines are linked together (where they are grouped is called a *carousel*), and the coins going into each contribute to the communal jackpot.

One attraction for this type of machine is that the jackpot can reach a size where the player has an overall positive expectation. This doesn't mean the "house" is losing any edge, just that the losings of all the previous players have pushed the jackpot up to the point that it pays more than it should.

For example, a one-dollar slot machine with four reels typically has 23 symbols on each reel, including one jackpot symbol on each reel. As a result, a player has one chance in $23 \times 23 \times 23 \times 23$, or one in 279,841, of hitting. If the jackpot exceeded $279,841, it would pay more than it should.

In actuality, the jackpot could be considerably smaller and the player's expectations still could be positive because all the lesser pays have to be figured in. For example, one cherry on the first reel pays two coins and comes up perhaps once in five spins.

The highest slot-machine payoff went to the player who hit a $992,000 jackpot at Caesars Tahoe (Stateline, Nevada); Caesars threw in an extra $8000 to make it an even million.

As the generation that grew up playing video arcade games comes of gambling age, video gaming devices will grow in popularity, and the old one-armed bandits may become obsolete. The most popular games will require a modicum of skill, such as the poker slot machines.

On the poker slot machines, players are "dealt" five cards, to which they can make a draw if the initial hand is not a completed poker hand (which happens most of the time). The skill comes in knowing whether to keep the small pair or draw two to the straight flush, keep the lone ace or draw five new cards—and, of course, knowing when the progressive jackpot (paid for catching a royal flush) on such a game has passed a point of positive expectations.

The market for these games is rapidly expanding, as states other than Nevada and New Jersey legalize limited gambling. Michigan, for instance, has begun testing a new video poker game and hopes to have 2000 machines installed around the state within a year.

Makers of video arcade games are rapidly jumping into the expanding video-gaming-device market, while start-up companies have formed exclusively for the production of these modified computers. The largest manufacturer and distributor of video gaming devices is Bally Corporation in Chicago, followed closely by International Gaming Technology (IGT) of Reno, itself a spinoff from Bally.

Meyco of Santa Clara, California, has some 40 machines placed in Nevada casinos on a test-market basis. Game-Plan (Chicago), Omega (Carlsbad, California), Games of Nevada, Summit (headquartered in England), Fortune Coin (Las Vegas), Al Coin (Carson City) and Bell Fruit Ltd. (Italy) are all producing for the market.

These video gaming machines all use 8-bit microprocessors (8080, 6502, Z80), and are, in effect, intelligent terminals with dedicated gaming programs. All they would need are monitor programs, RAM chips and the exchange of some PROMs to become microcomputers.

An added advantage of electronic gaming devices to the casinos is that the machines can all be tied into central monitoring equipment, providing a literally minute-to-minute report of each machine's action. A casino can then thoroughly check out machines that appear to be paying out too much, and make the payouts more liberal on or move machines that are not getting

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enough play.

The casino operators can maintain constant records on cash flow. An ancillary market has developed for creating monitoring equipment. Every month, Anthem Electronics of Santa Clara, California, produces thousands of Z8-based monitoring devices that can be hooked up to old preelectronic slot machines.

In the video slot-machine types of gaming devices, players are pitted against machines with a fixed house edge that steadily grind out their percentage from the total amount of "action" (how much money is wagered overall).

In contrast, The Dealer, an electronic poker table being test marketed by Pacific Electronic Sports Corporation (PESC) of Hayward, California, pits players against each other, just as in a "real" poker game. The Dealer shuffles and deals to six players, each with his own color monitor displaying his hand and telling him when to act.

Players discard and draw, in turn, by pressing play buttons. A polarized view screen blocks out side view; a player can never see the display of the players on either side of him. As further protection, each player's cards are displayed face down until the player presses a "peek" button that shows the faces of the cards only for as long as the button is pressed.

At the completion of each deal, the winning hand is determined by the computer and flashed on all screens. Of course, if only one player remains at the end, his cards are not shown.

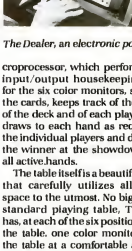
The Dealer is literally the machine analogue of a cardroom dealer, shuffling and distributing the cards, making sure everyone antes up, letting players know whose turn it is to act and correctly determining the winning hand. And it never needs a break!

The Dealer can be set for coin-operated play or for time pay. Typically, each player "antes" a quarter each hand (dropping the coin into the slot at his place), but the machine is easily set (switch-selectable on its interior boards) to deal two, three or more hands per coin deposit. The Dealer keeps the coins, which is how the machine pays for itself.

In time pay, The Dealer deals unlimited hands with no deposit of coins, and the management of the establishment that has rented or bought the machine charges each player an hourly fee for use of the facilities.

(These two methods are analogous to those used by existing cardrooms. In the first method, a house dealer removes a certain percentage from each pot. This is known in the cardroom business as *raking* and the game is a *rake game*. The other method is to charge each player a regular "time collection," or hourly rental fee, for the use of the facilities, chips, cards, license and for the privilege of playing with other players.)

The heart of The Dealer is a Z80 microprocessor, which performs all the input/output housekeeping chores for the six color monitors, shuffles all the cards, keeps track of the contents of the deck and of each player's hand, draws to each hand as requested by the individual players and determines the winner at the showdown among all active hands.



The Dealer, an electronic poker table

The table itself is a beautiful package that carefully utilizes all available space to the utmost. No bigger than a standard playing table, The Dealer has, at each of the six positions around the table, one color monitor set into the table at a comfortable angle plus several player-choice buttons. During actual play of each hand, each player uses the green-felt playing surface at the center of the table to place his actual betting chips above his screen.

Since player bets are completely separate from the quarters fed into The Dealer, the machine has no interest in the pots. The machine merely takes care of all the shuffling, dealing and determining of winner. The players are responsible for making their own bets.

There are several attractions of using such a game over one using real cards dealt by the players. Players who don't think they shuffle well or don't like to deal never have to physically handle any cards. The card distribution is better than that produced by the sloppy shuffling of many players (with winning cards of the previous hand sometimes tending to "stick" together).

Furthermore, the action is faster and smoother, once players master the easy controls. There can be no argument about who has the best hand, and cheating in the form of manipulation of the cards is impossible. It is also impossible to predict the coming sequence of cards, even by someone who has an intimate knowledge of the hardware and the random-number generator.

When the machine is first powered up and initialized, the hardware generates a 32-bit random number. This

See Gambling devices, page 36

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Gambling devices

continued from preceding page

number is used as the "seed" to generate a random-number sequence. The number generation uses the linear congruential method described in Donald Knuth's standard reference on seminumerical algorithms.

At an average of one minute per six-player hand, the random-number cycle would not repeat for more than 100 years. Even then, since the order of the deck constantly changes due to unpredictable human interaction with the cards, the actual cards dealt when the random-number sequence started to repeat would be different.

Once the random-number sequence is started, it is never restarted during the operating life of the machine. Each random number in the sequence selects the next card to be built from the deck.

When the first hand is played after initialization, the deck is ordered (as in a fresh deck of cards). From that point on, the deck is built from the discard pile in the order that the players discard. This adds a factor of nondeterminance to the deal that is neither controlled by the machine nor discernible to the players.

The random-number sequence is permanently "remembered" by battery-powered memories. In fact, these battery backup circuits protect against power failure. With this feature, even if power is lost in the middle of a hand, the game continues from the point of power loss once the power is restored. Player cards remain the same, and the shuffled deck retains its order.

Cutting of the deck is simulated by providing at the start of each hand, an 8-bit random number that selects the position in the discard pile to become the new top of the deck. Since there are more numbers (in the range 0-255) than cards in the deck and their generation is not in any way related to the operating or programming of the game, no repeating pattern of cards would ever form as a result of the cutting process. The process does, however, provide an additional factor of nondeterminance in the deal.

George Athanas, president of Pacific Electronic Sports Corporation, and a respected engineer in the electronics field, believes the algorithm of shuffling and dealing used in The Dealer to be superior to all schemes currently used in other electronic and electromechanical gaming devices. Athanas is also currently vice-president of marketing for BDS Computer Corporation, a supplier of plug-compatible line-printer systems.

The president and founder of BDS, Haig J. Ermoian, is another founding stockholder of PESC. The third partner is Jerry Reed, a former professional baseball player who has owned and managed several cardrooms in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Rather than install the table in an operating cardroom, PESC felt that it would get better data if it opened a new gaming room to conduct the market test. Consequently, the company obtained a new cardroom license from the City of Palo Alto in California.

Starting with no established customers, with no advertising beyond word of mouth, operating only five days a week with play from 7:00 P.M. to 1:00 A.M. (as opposed to the normal seven-day 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 A.M., or 24-hour, cardroom operation), The Dealer generated $3800 in one month. This approaches the amount that might be generated by a small-limit table in an established cardroom. Players loved the new game.

Athanas, Ermoian and Reed do not envision their product eating heavily into the established cardroom market. In fact, they anticipate resistance from long-time card players who want the "feel" of real cards in their hands.

They expect, instead, to create a new market among those who have not played in cardrooms but may be familiar with video arcada games. Small bars that cannot afford to keep full-time "live" games running would be interested in The Dealer, as would existing video arcades (which could install separate adults-only gaming areas). ■

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13-year-olds design games for TI, Apple

By David Needle, IW Staff

"I used to be able to whip out a good game in about a day, but now to be sure of the quality, it takes about a week."

So said Mike Cornelison, the 13-year-old cofounder of Corn Software, "a privately held business" started by Mike and a friend of his (also 13) named Scott Emigh, at Mike's parents' home in Corona del Mar, California.

It all began about two years ago when Mike's father, a training supervisor for American Airlines, bought a Texas Instruments 99/4 home computer (the predecessor of the 99/4A).

"I slipped in a few game modules when he wasn't using it, read the BASIC manual and started programming," recalled Mike matter-of-factly. (He has since supplemented his knowledge by attending computer camp in Santa Barbara, California, for the past two summers.)

Meanwhile, Mike's friend Scott had begun writing games on his family's Apple II computer. The two eventually decided to go into business together (with the aid of Mike's father and another friend) and formed Corn Software, which has two divisions, one for Apple software and the other for TI. The company also employs about 30 other local programmers, many of them teenagers, who are paid on a royalty basis.

Piracy

Mike has written about 50 games for the 99/4A since Corn Software started, of which 36 have proven to be "sellable." The company gets most of its business from ads placed in 99 er magazine, an independent publication in Eugene, Oregon, about TI computers, such as the 99/4A, that use TI's 9900 processor.

Corn is not exactly a threat to the Adventure Internationals and Visi-Corps of the microcomputer-software world as yet.

"We had to spend $200, which is about two-fifths of our bank account, on a protection program for our Apple software," noted Mike. But his firm recently received a $300 order from a dealer that put Corn in the black financially for the first time.

"Piracy is terrible. It takes away from our revenue," lamented Mike. He's grateful, however, for a built-in function in TI Extended BASIC that allows users to protect programs once they're written.

Corn recently received a boost from a somewhat unexpected source, Texas Instruments itself.

While waiting on standby for an airplane flight (the Cornelison family can fly free because of the father's affiliation with American Airlines), Mike struck up a conversation with Bob Hubbard, an account sales manager for *Computerworld* newspaper.

Hubbard, who had met more than a few computer-company executives in his day, though none in Mike's age bracket, told the young entrepreneur

See Young programmers, page 41

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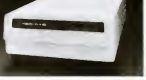

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CHRISTMAS ON DISPLAY

Story and photos by Deborah Wise, IW Staff

Christmas is on display in New York. The avenues of shops are decking their windows with more than holly as recession-hit retailers try to lure dollars from Yuletide consumers.

Video games and video-game systems are high on everyone's list, but there are more imaginative offerings in the field of electronics.

Take Hammacher-Schlemmer, for example. This novelty store, founded in 1848, caters to the rich who don't care how much they spend to gratify a whim.

Last year, *InfoWorld* wrote about the Hammacher-Schlemmer Robot. We were a year too soon; the store was not able to deliver the product.

This year's catalog, however, contains another robot that the manufacturer, Robotics International Corporation from Michigan, promises will be ready for delivery in January. Hammacher-Schlemmer has already taken ten robot orders.

The robot, called Jenus, costs $7995. For that hefty sum, you get a 52-inch-tall robot with an on-board Apple Computer and vacuum cleaner. Jenus can talk, clean up, remember the layout of a house, answer commands from its owner, answer the door and even serve drinks, according to John Collins, president of

Above: The Diet Cube signals a time to eat and a time to abstain. Below: To play chess against a robot-arm opponent, you'll have to pay $1495.

Above: Lights glow on the Christmas tree at Henri Bendel in New York City. Below: This chic ball-point pen and calculator combination costs $50 at Henri Bendel.

Above: Pro Golf Swing Analyzer Right: Punch in the type of expense incurred and the amount on your own PEAR. Below: Unusual domino-clock timepiece costs $39.95

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Robotics International.

Other Christmas goodies are pictured. They include:

- A $19.95 electronic eating regulator called the Diet Cube that shows green, yellow and red lights at different intervals signaling when you can eat and when you must rest.
- A $495 Pro Golf Swing Analyzer. You swing over the synthetic turf and sensors tell you how far and where your shot would go.
- A robot chess game. You and your robot-arm opponent make the moves on this magnetic metallic board. It costs a cool $1495.
- A clock that tells the time, using dominoes, for $39.95.

Even the traditionally chic New York stores are going electronic. Four blocks west of Hammacher-Schlemmer on 57th Street at Henri Bendel, amid the perfume and silk, the electronically minded can pick up a $stoles ball-point pen calculator for $50. Bendel's is also selling a $30 "watchman" stereo. The store's publicity director, Nina Santisi, tried it out for the photograph.

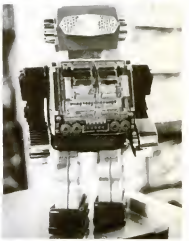
No Christmas shopping tour of New York is complete without a visit to FAO Schwartz, the world-famous toy store. Here, the electronic wizardry is hidden behind the more traditional fluffy stuffed animals, train sets and delicate dollhouses that have taken their places beneath Christmas trees for decades.

FAO Schwartz does have a busy video-game section, but it doesn't specialize in electronic toys. Instead of intelligent robots, it's selling a line of less advanced, but quite charming, good old battery robots.

The jingle of money mingles with the sound of Yuletide bells as busy New Yorkers stock up on stocking stuffers. ■

Above: Robot gladiators at FAO Schwartz. Top right: The Windmill measures lung power. Lower right: Predict weather with Digital Weather Console.

Above: Nina Santisi demonstrates the "watchman" stereo. Right: A deluxe battery-operated robot priced at $50 at FAO Schwartz Below: Diet Trac calorie counter is on sale at Hammacher-Schlemmer. Below left: Antiheadache Biofeedback System helps you keep well this holiday season.



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Young programmers

continued from page 37

he might be able to set up a meeting with Fred Bucy, the president of Texas Instruments.

A few weeks later, Mike, his father and partner Scott were flying to TI's headquarters in Dallas, Texas.

"They gave us a royal tour; it was very impressive," recalled Mike.

Part of the "tour" included an hour-long meeting with Bucy. "We talked about the machine (the 99/4A), and I told him just what I liked and didn't like about it," Mike said.

Although Mike is quick to defend the 99/4A as "a good system," he said he did complain to Bucy about a few alleged quirks.

More games for kids

"They could have included a catalog statement in their [programming] languages, instead of making you write a program [or plug in a separate disk or cartridge to read a directory]."

Mike's other complaint to Bucy might seem surprising, coming from a third-party software vendor for the TI computer. "I told him I wished TI would develop more game software so more kids would buy the machine. I showed five friends of mine some of our games [on the 99/4A], and they all went out and bought [systems]. If there were more games, more kids would buy the machine."

Mike said he didn't discuss marketing some of his software through TI with Bucy because "I didn't want to impose, and besides I enjoy keeping the company small." Still, Corn benefited from the visit to TI headquarters.

"I couldn't believe how generous they were," noted Mike, who received a programmer's calculator, literature on machine language, ("that will really help us") a memory-expansion board and TI Logo, compliments of TI.

Inside TI headquarters, Mike got a first-hand view of how TI manufactures silicon chips. He also toured the speech laboratory where TI is conducting advanced research on electronically recorded speech and other speech-synthesis technologies.

"I really came away with a higher opinion of the company, because they respected two teenagers enough to listen to our ideas and help us out with their own ideas," Mike said.

Professional package

Corn's production costs are minimal. Programs are recorded onto blank diskettes (also onto cassettes) and packaged in Ziploc plastic baggies. There is also some colorful artwork (done by a neighborhood friend) inside each baggy, and the overall package looks "very professional," according to Mike.

Corn hopes to expand its line of software to include educational and utility programs, but Mike concedes, "They're just not as much fun to do."

Prices for both Apple and TI software from Corn range from $6.95 to $17.95.

Mike is particularly enthusiastic about the company's offering for the TI computer, an action game called Varg.

"The plot is that the president is kidnapped by Mongoloids from the planet Mongos. As the head of the secret service, you (the player) have to get through ten screens (or levels) to rescue him. It's really ten games wrapped into one; every time you reach a higher level, it automatically loads a new game," explained Mike.

Players who reach the tenth level of Varg and send in a photo proving that they've reached that level receive a sticker from Corn attesting to their prowess. Not bad marketing for a nine-month-old start-up company.

Asked whether he intends to stay in the computer field, Mike responded, "I'm really more of an entrepreneur than a computer person. I'd like to start more businesses, but I'm sure I'll stay with Corn for a long time. There aren't enough software companies to serve all the TI users out there." ■

(Left to right): Scott Emigh and Mike Cornelison of Corn Software meet TI Consumer Group president William Turner and corporate vice-president of research development and engineering George Heilmeier.

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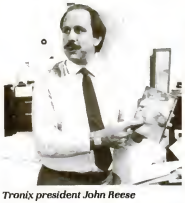
New game maker acknowledges banking origins

By Scott Mace, IW Staff

What on earth is the designer of Citibank's automated teller doing running a game-software company?

Actually, the two computer applications have a lot more in common than you might think. Games and automated tellers are two of the first computer functions that were turned directly over to the user. For many, these two applications allow them to give orders to a computer for the first time in their lives.

Tronix, the Inglewood, California, company that John Reese started after



Tronix president John Reese

leaving Citicorp, is producing games for the VIC 20 and Atari home computers. Softsel, a major software distributor, started Tronix after Reese concluded it was time for the distributor to invest in the home-software market, and time for him to head up the effort.

The first games from Tronix—Kid Grid, Sidewinder, Galactic Blitz and Swarm—are standard versions of games popularized on other computers. These games include standardized user-control features, however. The VIC games, which use assembly language to cram as much sound and fury into 3800 bytes as possible, are sure to grab the attention of the million or so VIC owners eager to rise above the usually crude graphics the machine provides.

Reese is the banker turned software-company president who is running around the country, trying to get the new games in as many stores as possible by Christmas.

The current focus on home arcade games is deceptive, though, since Reese comes from a background heavy with terms such as home banking, videotex and two-way cable. A few years ago, he was running a research lab in New York for Citicorp subsidiary Transaction Technology Incorporated (TTI), a company that was investigating home banking via phone, cable and personal computers.

Reese left TTI because the home-banking concept still hadn't gotten far from the laboratory. At his going-away party at Citicorp, he ran into an old friend, Bob Leff, one of the executives at Softsel, who had been Reese's "star pupil" at TTI.

Both Reese and Softsel noticed there was a lack of good games for low-end personal computers. Of the VIC, Reese said, "There are a lot of folks out there crying for some fun." Reese also considers the game market as a foot in the door for more home-software offerings later on, though.

Thus was Tronix born. Reese resolved to stuff as many features into the games as possible (one has 40 levels of play) and to design a standard user interface, with certain keys or buttons dedicated to certain directions or to functions such as restart.

Reese also noticed that left-handed players had trouble with many keyboard controls and so he had "switch-hitter" options put into the games.

Reese went to UCLA student Jimmy Huey for three of the games, while computer-science graduate Arti Haroutunian programmed Kid Grid.

Huey wanted to make sure the games were challenging. "Originally, I created Sidewinder because I felt players were mastering other video games too quickly," Huey said.

Sidewinder, which owes some of its concepts to Defender, is so fast that Reese had a training mode added for adults. In this handicapped mode, the slower-thumbed adults could learn how to play Sidewinder while it ambled along at half-speed.

Furthermore, if the speed of the adult version is too fast, Sidewinder, like all Tronix games, has a pause button.

See Tronix, page 43

Galactic Blitz, new game from Tronix

If you just bought another computer, boy are you gonna be sorry.

Epson.

Test yourself and take InfoWorld's Nth trivia quiz

By Michael Swaine, IW Staff

It's been a long time since we've had a trivia quiz, and it's not clear why that is. Is it that our readership, grown hidebound and stodgy since the frivolous days when they and microcomputing and *InfoWorld* were young, can no longer stomach such intellectual pabulum, and that we, ever sensitive to our readers' inner needs, crossed such fare off the menu?

Or have we at *InfoWorld* grown so large a collective head as to be incapable of stooping to anything so trivial as, um, trivia, without suffering incapacitating vertigo?

Maybe we just forgot. In any case, the microcomputer industry, for all its vaunted maturity, is as full of trivia today as it has ever been.

So, apropos of our games theme this week, we present the Nth *InfoWorld* trivia quiz. No prizes of any kind will be awarded: no free t-shirts with tacky four-color advertisements imprinted on them; we won't even mention your name if you send us your answers. (We promise.) If we feel like it, we'll print our answers—the correct ones—in our next issue.

Maybe you know, and you should know if you read the profile of Les Solomon in our November 29 issue, that the Processor Tech Sol computer was named after Les Solomon, then technical editor of *Popular Electronics*, or that Les Solomon's adolescent daughter named the MITS Altair computer. But do you know the adolescent jokes behind the naming of these two companies: Soroc and Sorcim?

Sometimes companies outgrow the names taken in their exuberant youth, and would just as soon not be reminded of them. What company founders could you embarrass by bringing up these all-but-forgotten company childhood nicknames? Kentucky Fried Computers. Computer Shack. *Kilobyte* magazine. The *Intelligent Machines Journal*. Intergalactic Digital Research.

Let us also lift for a moment above the wash of time the names of the people who performed the miracles, the engineers and programmers who created the microcomputers and programs that in their turn made fortunes, for whomever.

Of course you know who designed the Apple II, but can you name the designer of the TRS-80? Adam Osborne didn't design the Osborne 1, but did Clive Sinclair design the Sinclair ZX-81? Who designed the IBM PC?

Who were the programmers who wrote these significant software products: VisiCalc, WordStar and Little Brickout, one of the first games for the Apple?

Not all technical writers are unsung. Can you name the now-famous tech writer who wrote the documentation for the Intel 8080 microprocessor? ■

The new Epson QX-10 is unlike any personal computer you've ever seen. It's a computer for people who don't have the time to learn computers; a computer you can be using within minutes.

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That's nice to hear from a magazine like *Byte*, of course, but it doesn't surprise us. It's just what we intended the QX-10 to be all along.

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But useability isn't the only thing the QX-10 has going for it. As *Byte* says, "the QX-10 gives you a great deal for your money.

"Help is available at any time through the HASCI (Human Application Standard Computer Interface) keyboard Help key ... Text can be entered at any time just as you would in a conventional word processor. The Calc key turns the system into a basic 4-function calculator. Graphics can be created via the Draw key. The Sched (schedule) key gives you access to a computer-kept appointment book, a built-in clock/timer/alarm, and an event scheduler."

Advanced hardware for advanced software.
As for hardware, *Popular Computing*, another industry leader, says: "The QX-10 includes ... a number of advanced hardware features ... The basic components of the system are a detachable keyboard, a high resolution monochrome display, and a system unit containing two 5¼ inch disk drives. The drives use double-sided, double-density disks (340K bytes per disk) and are amazingly compact ... The QX-10 uses an 8-bit Z80A microprocessor. The system contains 256 bytes of RAM. Some of the RAM is ... battery powered ... which lets the computer retain information when the power is off."

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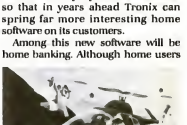
Tronix

continued from preceding page

Ultimately, Reese is not searching solely for big profits from games, although he admits there is a lot of money in Atari and VIC software. Brand-name loyalty is Reese's desire, so that in years ahead Tronix can spring far more interesting home software on its customers.

Among this new software will be home banking. Although home users



Sidewinder has a training mode to slow its speed for beginning players.

won't be able to make a deposit or get cash, they will be able to see what their balance is, make various money transfers and obtain other information via their home computers.

It's still too early to say exactly when the hookups will be made or by whom, but Citicorp will deploy one nationwide home-banking service, Homebase, in 1984 or 1985, Reese said.

The biggest reason home telecommunications hasn't blossomed so far, Reese said, is the lack of reasons for a home user to communicate over videotex. Nevertheless, the information providers will be in place before the end of the decade.

In the meantime, Tronix has moved quickly after incorporating just a month ago. Tronix software will be distributed through Softsel and other distributors as well as mass-market supplier of the VIC and Atari 400. Reese is looking at several programs for future release, but he is picky.

"A good game should have a life span of at least a year," Reese noted. "I don't like the quality of a lot of software I see." One machine he'd like to pursue is the TI Home Computer, but so far he hasn't found the right software to market. ■

Shrinking Pac-Man leads game-wristwatch market

By Tom Shea, IW Staff

In the musical *Oklahoma!*, a cowpoke sings about burlesque performers in the big city, who have "gone about as far as they can go." Now the makers of digital watches have gone about as far as they can go, too. Or so it seems. Pac-Man and the whole family of video games have shrunk. Now, they are being marketed as wristwatches by several enterprising watch companies.

Bally Midway Manufacturing of Franklin Park, Illinois, father of the famous Pac-Man arcade game, has now licensed more than 600 Pac-Man products. Among the 600 is the Pac-Man Game Watch, manufactured by Nelsonics of Long Island City, New York.

On a simplified game maze, the Pac-Man Muncher moves among ghost monsters and energy-food dots to the tune of (optional) sound effects. The watch automatically records your highest game score and provides ever-harder levels of difficulty. The Pac-Man watch also tells time and has a musical alarm.

For $34.95, suggested retail, you can munch dots to your heart's content. Best Products discount houses are selling the watch for $24.87.

Nelsonics was the first company in America to come out with a game watch, according to spokesman Bernie Frieder. Last Christmas, the firm introduced the Space Attacker watch, a game watch that requires the player to shoot down UFOs with missiles. This year, in addition to the fast-selling Pac-Man watch, the firm is selling two other games that strap to the wrist: Tank Battle and Sea Ranger.

How involved can a player become in such tiny game screens? "You'd be surprised," Frieder says. "It's easy to get engrossed in the game. It's pretty realistic."

Nelsonics, a division of the larger watch-making firm of M.Z. Berger of New York City, has already sold more than half a million of the Pac-Man watches, Frieder says. The firm will unveil two new game watches early next year. Frieder won't say what they are until their debut at the upcoming Consumer Electronics Show.

The late Chester Gould, creator of the Dick Tracy comic strip, never tired of predicting the development of a two-way wrist TV. It hasn't happened yet, but watchmaker Armitron Corporation of Long Island City, New York, is selling a one-way wrist radio. The Trac I AM Radio Watch includes a set of lightweight headphones that plugs into a jack on the side of the watch.

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Volume and tuning controls are located on the face of the watch, just under the digital display.

The Radio Watch displays hours, minutes, seconds, month, day and date; it also includes a chronograph and alarm. The suggested retail price is $39.95; Best Products has it on sale for $19.99.

Armitron sells a full line of watches, analog and digital; the firm has been in the watch business for 26 years, but only recently has it come out with game watches.

Also strapped to the nation's wrists are watches with calculators that let you add, subtract, multiply, divide and store numbers in memory; chime every hour; make a musical note when

Calculator watch by Timex

you key in a number; keep track of lap time when you jog; and sound daily and weekly alarms.

Of course, they also tell time. Timex's calculator watch has all these features and sells for $29.95. Timex has steered clear of game watches, at least so far. A spokesman for the big watch firm says Timex doesn't go for trends, but instead sells watches that last a long time.

Armitron also sells a calculator watch that includes a melody alarm and chronograph for $39.95, suggested retail. Consumers Distributing is selling the men's Calculator Musical Alarm watch for $27.97.

Radio Shack stores are stocking a Calculator Alarm Watch, too. The watch combines a four-function calculator with time, calendar, alarm and stopwatch functions.

Tandy/Radio Shack is also selling the Fire-Away Game Watch this year, which features two space-war games. The watch displays time, month and date, and it includes a 24-hour alarm and hourly beeper. The Fire-Away watch is selling at local Radio Shack stores for $24.95.

There are two other timepieces on the market that, although they are not games, should be mentioned for their novel use of digital electronics.

Radio Shack's VoxClock literally "tells" you the time with a voice-simulation chip. The unit looks like a simulated-walnut box with a speaker and button on top. When you press the button VoxClock tells you the time, including A.M. or P.M. It also automatically tells the time every hour.

Armitron's Musical Worldtimer LCD Watch displays a world map with 19 time zones. The dual alarm plays two tunes: "Around the World in 80 Days" and "It's a Small World." Suggested retail price is $59.95, but Consumers Distributing is selling it for $44.97. ■

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Happy Holidays From InfoWorld

Editorial

Stop playing games with games

The surgeon general says video games can be hazardous to your health. He might be right—for the wrong reasons. Many games lack a few simple features that could make them far more enjoyable. This Christmas, consumers should be careful what ends up in their software stockings, because a lot of it could launch the players into fits of unhealthy rage and frustration.

Here are some of the most annoying habits of bad home-computer games, as determined by resident gamesters Palmer D. Quinlan and Allen Gibson:

- **The nonstop nightmare.** Nothing is more frustrating than reaching 100,000 on Space Typhoid and being called away by the phone, the boss or the spouse. This is especially taxing, though, if the game cannot be frozen until you return. Yet many game makers persist in leaving out this important feature.
- **High score today, gone tomorrow.** How difficult can it be for a computer to save the highest game score to date to the game disk? Only a handful of game makers add this feature. Lack of this attribute allows unscrupulous players to lie about their high scores with impunity and forces honest players to be cross-examined about the validity of their claims to fame.
- **Sound and fury, whether you like it or not.** Games that don't allow you to toggle the sound effects on and off are nothing short of barbaric. Often these games have the most garish sound effects. Children drive their parents crazy with these games, and office workers playing these noisemakers are unable to fool their superiors into thinking the business application software is running.
- **Long introductions.** Some game companies feel the need to give you a lengthy light and sound show before you begin playing, but true gamers want to get down to business. Perhaps when a 48K game is loading, there is cause for pause (and some of those games pass this time with a 30-second blank screen that makes you wonder if the program crashed). For 16K games, though, spare us the hi-res copyright-infringement warning, the little guy dancing around, the missiles doing the high kick....
- **Endless preliminaries.** Nothing is more frustrating than having to play through 15 levels you've already mastered in order to get to the level of your current ability, yet virtually none of the game manufacturers has a way to circumvent this. The result is hours wasted wandering through conquered territory, eventually resulting in boredom and an early retirement for the game. For those of us who consider mastering higher levels more important than racking up raw points, jumps to higher levels should be an option at the beginning of every game.
- **Nonstandard hardware interfaces.** Some games work better with one brand of joystick, some work better with another, but almost none tell us what controller is best to use with the game. Game manufacturers can point the finger at nonstandardized controller manufacturers, but we suspect the true solution is something we've seen in a few games—the ability to configure for different joysticks or paddles at the beginning of the game. More of this, please!
- **Me-toolsm.** Another Pac-Man, another Frogger, another Defender. Companies looking for a buck take an arcade winner, modify one or two features so they won't be sued for copyright infringement and release the clone. At times this cloning can also come from the desire to get any game out on the market quickly, and the clone may wear a fancy name and package that bear little resemblance to the original game. Only when the buyer gets it home and turns it on does he realize he is the proud owner of another Pac-Man ripoff.
- **Feature overkill.** It isn't something we've seen a lot of, but game designers could go too far the other way if they aren't careful. One game we recently received allowed us to change all the playing parameters to fix the game in our favor in many different ways. Although some of the millions of possible game variations were more interesting than the "vanilla version," we were on our honor not to shatter the existing high score by, for example, taking 99 turns.

At present the crisis in games is still a lack of features, instead of too many. If buyers use their game dollars wisely at Christmas, maybe the game companies will listen up and play fair.—AG & PDQ

Letters to the Editor

Communication aid

For the people who are interested in getting a copy of the program MBOOT3.ASM (see Jay Lucas' article "Freeware: the chicken/egg dilemma with MODEM7," *InfoWorld*, November 8, 1982, page 64), an article containing the listing, along with the telephone numbers of remote C/PM systems and tips on using them, is in *Dr. Dobb's Journal*, #72, October, 1982, page 42.

Although I had known about the existence of these systems and had acquired a modem six months ago, it was this article that finally enabled me to communicate with them. I recently entered MODEM3.ASM into my system and have downloaded many interesting and valuable programs from several remote systems since then.

Andrew Omori
Burbank, CA

In defense of SuperSoft's Ada

I am writing in response to Bob Hofkin's letter to the editor in the November 22, 1982, issue of *InfoWorld*.

Mr. Hofkin appears to be missing the point of SuperSoft's development path on Ada. It is still SuperSoft's intent to place our Ada into the validation process sometime in 1983, but we also intend always to have a reasonable learning tool in our released Ada. It appears that the greatest requirement of a language learning tool is first its speed of compilation and, second, the accuracy of its information. I am glad that Mr. Hofkin noted the speed of the SuperSoft compiler. As is well known, learning tools are critical to the general acceptance of any new language.

Mr. Hofkin's statement that none of the early UCSD Pascal designers remember me is not at all surprising, considering that I have never worked on or with UCSD Pascal and never stated that I had. Perhaps he has mistaken me for another? In general, I suggest he checks his facts rather than resort to innuendo.

Michael Pagels
Manager of Software Development
SuperSoft
Champaign, IL

No more innuendo

In general we at SuperSoft have been pleased with the press coverage given to our company. Being one of the larger (and older) companies in the microcomputer software business seems to make us fair game for any and all types of criticism. However, *InfoWorld* has always, until now, not allowed innuendo and character assaults to enter into its well-known software reviews and responses. By publishing Mr. Hofkin's letter, you have hurt the reputation of a trusted employee (and friend). We think that this is a true injustice, and one that must be set straight.

First, Mike Pagels is not the type of person to lie to anyone, let alone a customer! We do not understand the UCSD Pascal project reference; we don't know how Mr. Hofkin was left with this impression. But the printing of this unverified letter has done damage to Mike Pagels' reputation. We think that Mr. Hofkin owes Mike Pagels an apology at once!

I cannot help but believe that *InfoWorld* should have checked out Mr. Hofkin's story before printing that damaging letter. You have lost the trust of everyone who knows Mike Pagels'and have set a dangerous precedent.

Second, SuperSoft's Ada is an excellent compiler that is well suited as both a learning tool and software-development tool. Our Ada is for the Z80, Telesoft's is for the 8086. No fair comparisons can be made with such different processors.

Herbert Schildt
President
SuperSoft
Champaign, IL

Amicable departure

The article in your publication's November 1 issue about MicroPro International created a false impression about my departure from that company.

Contrary to the impression left by the article, I voluntarily left full-time employment at MicroPro to pursue my own business objectives. The parting was amicable, as MicroPro will certainly confirm.

I am annoyed at the appearance of the article, since I was not interviewed prior to its publication. I trust you will correct the misleading impression left by the article in an upcoming edition.

Bruce Van Natta

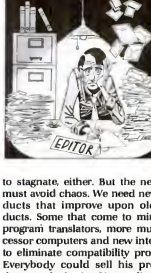
Car-computer analogy inaccurate

Regarding your editorial of November 1, 1982, bemoaning the sameness of computer products: Mr. Dvorak's analogy to the automobile industry is appropriate in only one way. Sometimes computer magazines remind me of the car-enthusiast magazines I used to read before I became discouraged by their emphasis on illegal speed, only the latest cars and $50,000-plus automobiles. I hope that your newspaper will not give itself over to praising new, expensive and exotic products exclusively.

The computer industry cannot be compared to the automobile industry with much validity. Every new car does not need a new and exclusive kind of fuel (programming language, software); it is neither expandable nor flexible as computers are; it essentially has a single purpose (transportation).

I hope that the tactics and aims of the computer industry do not emulate those of the automobile industry—planned obsolescence and pointless differences in products in the name of "style."

I don't want the computer industry



to stagnate, either. But the newness must avoid chaos. We need new products that improve upon old products. Some that come to mind are program translators, more multiprocessor computers and new interfaces to eliminate compatibility problems. Everybody could sell his product, then, on the basis of its quality of design and construction, rather than its exclusive, and copy-protected, features.

Dennis A. Church
Collinsville, IL

An unannouncement

We at Sperry Univac have read your article "Sperry Univac first to *announce* use of new CP/M" (emphasis added) in the November 1, 1982, issue of *InfoWorld*. This is erroneous; your interview with Mr. Kent Hogan was not a formal announcement by Sperry Univac of its use of CP/M Plus. We believe that your use of the term *announce* offers the misleading impressions of a formal Sperry Univac announcement.

While the statments attributed to Mr. Hogan are accurately reported, the headline and introductory paragraph inaccurately represent the interview as a product announcement by Sperry Univac. Again, the reality is that the new CP/M version is being evaluated on a beta-test-site basis and is not currently being offered in the Sperry Univac product line.

Wayne W. Adams
Director, Management and Internal Communications
Sperry Univac
Blue Bell, PA

Crime prevention requires dedication

I was very pleased to see the coverage given computer crime in your November 22, 1982, issue. A networked society will definitely have some bad apples trying to put their electronic hands in someone else's pocket.

There is an offsetting factor, however, that also deserves some attention: the use of computers as crime-deterrent devices. Police departments and security agencies now routinely exchange information about crimes and criminals using computer communications. (I wonder what would happen if the criminal broke into *that* net and cleared his own record!)

My awareness of these problems has increased since we introduced Keynote, a microcomputer-based system that is specifically not in communication with *anything*. The Keynote system manages information about locks and keys, automatically issues keys, records lock data and enforces access restrictions for any kind of lock.

Naturally, such information and authority must be maintained under tight security. Therefore, we chose to employ a free-standing, dedicated microcomputer that can be physically secured under lock and key, as well as being password-protected. It is our belief that this type of physical isolation is the only way to guarantee that Information is protected from electronic break-in.

The best way to protect high-security information is to avoid exposing it needlessly. Our research indicates that in the enthusiasm for integrated data bases, systems designers are including data that creates vulnerability and does not require the ability to relate to the rest of the data base. For this type of data, dedicated microcomputers, physically secured, seem to be ideal. Our Tactical Applications Series, of which Keynote is the first component, addresses this issue.

Kudos to John Zussman for a thought-provoking and intelligent approach to the computer-human interface. The humans are grateful.

Edmund P. O'Connell
President
Key 1 Computer Systems
Newport, RI

Ratings revised

After reading Microsoft's comments on my review of its BASCOM BASIC compiler for the TRS-80, I was prompted to reevaluate the scorebox ratings I gave the product. (The review appeared in the August 9, 1982, issue.)

Initially, I gave the product a "fair" performance rating because I felt that the most expensive TRS-80 BASIC compiler should have correspondingly superior performance. My judgment was made primarily because the efficiency of the final program depended heavily (too heavily, I thought) on how the source code was written.

In comparing BASCOM with other BASIC compilers, though, I have come to the conclusion that it is, in fact, one of the better products on the market. It is true that the product demands a certain level of competence on the part of the programmer to generate fast run-time code. This is really not an undue restriction, however, since a compiler is intended for serious users who presumably know how best to use it.

In summary, BASCOM deserves at least a "good" performance rating. It is a fine product usable in many diverse applications. It has the added benefit of being compatible with Microsoft's BASIC interpreter (which is used in the TRS-80 family of computers), as well as the ability to link with programs generated by Microsoft's FORTRAN compiler and Macro Assembler.

T.A. Daneliuk
Chicago, IL

Viewpoint

Computer dreams for everyone

By Lyla Brumbaugh

I'm working on details of the family's monthly budget when the doorbell rings; it's the mail carrier with a package. I open the box and find seven new computer programs sent by the We Got 'em All Warehouse.

The first is Design your own Windmill, written in engineering BASIC for the Southern Sun micro. This must be for Jim. Now that he has the garden room with solar collector working efficiently, he has been talking about additional energy-saving strategies.

Here is another one for Jim. The Apex Meditation: An Apex Spreadsheet. This will have to run on the big Moor system.

The printing on the envelope of Space on a Platter describes the next one as "a mammoth collection of space games for the Kansas Tools system." I wonder who ordered that. Oh well, probably all of us will play with it, and my fourth graders ought to love it.

This is the one I've been waiting for, my ticket to easier work at my desk. It has a dictionary, graphs, guest register, reports, mailing lists, letter writer, check register and everything else to help me keep up with the paperwork. Your Desk on a Disk is a new program specially designed to work on the new ABC-EmCee.

I'm sorry I looked at the next one; I'd hate to have Bobby think I was paying. It's named Tape to Disk Conversions. Apparently our high schooler is planning to change all of his tapes that run on his bedroom SOS-99 so they'll work here in the computer room on the family Do-It-All. I hope he wasn't planning to monopolize one of the hard disks. Maybe it's time he buy his own.

Here is the other program I had ordered. Grading on the Curve is another in Admiral's series of teacher-aid programs. It will probably work on the classroom Admiral, but to make it really helpful, I'll have to see if I can create a tie between that machine and my work here at home. There's a spot on the Do-it-All's dial for the Admiral configuration. It shouldn't require much more than another phone line for me.

This one is called Trends You Can Use. Hm, that must mean that Jim Junior is planning to do some work here during vacation from the Metropolitan Business Academy that will be transportable to his Strawberry at school. That means another dedicated telephone is needed. Well, he'll just have to pay for his own; the family budget simply can't pick up the tab for all those long-distance calls.

Now let's see how they work. I set the kitchen on automatic so the dinner I had planned will cook itself and sit down at the console to check out the new programs.

Since there's no one here to catch me at it, I decide to play with Space on a Platter. Making sure that the automatic telephone section of the computer is turned on, I turn the system-selection control to Kansas Tools on the dial and insert the new disk.

The iris diaphragm adjusts itself to the 5¼-inch disk size and grasps the disk so that the laser reader will be in the right position for the Kansas Tools system. I murmur my thanks to Babbage that the Do-It-All can cope with 8-bit, 16-bit and even 32-bit processor designs.

With more than an hour free, I decide to really relax while I'm playing. I activate the mechanism that creates a giant screen, pick up the remote keyboard and carry it to my contoured chair.

There, I place the manual in the reader/holder and start to load one of the space games. I lean back with the keyboard on my lap and tilt my legs up to the most comfortable position . . .

. . . and realize that I'm still sitting at my desk, dreaming of how wonderful life would be in this computer age if only we didn't have to limit ourselves to software that works on the computer we bought three years ago!

Lyla Brumbaugh is a widow, a grandmother and a retired newspaper publisher. She has no background in computers but firmly believes the whole concept is magic.

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Don't trust the computer clergy—learn the language

The priests of computing are at it again (John Unger Zussman, "Random Access," November 15 and 22, 1982). Once more, they tell us poor illiterate slobs that *they* will take care of our needs. We shouldn't worry about the terribly complex job of learning to read and write for the computer. Trust the priests. They understand these mysteries and will interpret them to us—in the form of "user-friendly software."

Zussman and his brethren in the computer clergy would do well to review the history of the printing press, the resulting struggle between entrenched church authority and an increasingly literate and independent congregation, and the final acceptance of universal literacy as the central goal of public education.

Literacy and personal freedom are closely tied. Literate people can read and write for themselves. They are not forced to depend on experts to read signs, want ads and agreements or to write letters to friends or their representatives in Congress.

Math literates can solve arithmetic problems for themselvs. They do not have to trust experts to tell which is a better deal: three grapefruit for 80 cents or four for a dollar. Computer literacy, which includes both knowledge and skills, is like these other literacies. It gives the possessor independence and freedom of choice.

By the time today's eighth-graders seek work, three-quarters of the U.S. jobs will be in handling and processing information. People who can work skillfully, creatively and independently with computers will rise to the top. Those who know only how to answer multiple-choice questions on a "user-friendly menu," created by a computer expert, will sink to the bottom.

Zussman's analogy between music literacy and computer literacy is way off the mark. Performance skills in music take years of painful and dedicated work to develop. Young learners complain bitterly. The market for music skills is fairly small.

Performance skills in computing come easily. Young learners are eager for more. The market for computer skills is vast and growing.

It may be that the computer priesthood would *like* us to believe that the subject is terribly difficult; but the fact is that in one semester an average eighth-grader can learn how to operate a computer, the grammar and spelling rules of a computer language, the concepts of variables and data, the top-down methodology for program design and the use of disciplined structures for solving problems in logic.

Except for computer languages themselves, no "user-friendly" software that I know of gives the user a single one of these important problem-solving tools.

To the readers I say this: The next time someone tells you that you don't need to learn to read and write for the computer to use it, ask who he works for. Like as not, you will have just met a man of the computer cloth. If you like being read to in Latin, he's your man; otherwise, go learn to read and write for yourself. You'll probably enjoy it.

Arthur Luehrmann
Berkeley, CA

Technical literature helps products sell when it's done well

I'm responding to your August 30 issue on documentation. May I include some of my thoughts and observations on technical writing?

From a memorandum submitted to management: "Consumers are becoming more concerned with product service and maintenance. On their demand, more technical literature is finding its way into the point-of-sale contact with potential customers. In

See Writing, page 52

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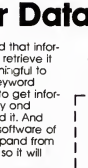

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Let them play games: how to keep the military alert

I was reading about micros in the military (October 18, 1982) and came across Major Frank Derfler expressing concern about games running on "legitimate" computers at a Strategic Air Command base. Having stood many days of duty in the Navy, I can think of no more legitimate use for a microcomputer than playing games. This must at first seem ridiculous, but think about it.

These men and women are supposed to be on "alert," but they are in a situation that promotes boredom, drowsiness and dulled reactions.

Computer games, on the other hand, train you to be awake, alert, quick witted and quick in your reactions.

In fact, as a taxpayer, I would be appalled to walk into one of the thousands of watch stations, ready rooms and other alert facilities in the military and find an expensive microcomputer sitting idle in front of a serviceman (sitting idle) when he could be putting it to great use. A fully configured microcomputer is going to cost $4000 to $5000. Why should it only be used a few hours a day, when for a few dollars more in game programs it could be used much more—perhaps all day?

Maybe the military could make these games more respectable by establishing certain criteria for what they should accomplish. They could assign some of their standby crews to test and evaluate games for applicability and conformity to the standards.

I would have reservations about a flying game in which a player who has crashed still had two more planes in reserve. This attitude might not be a good habit for a pilot to acquire, but for other servicemen, it would be okay.

Most of the games that test reactions, wits, your brain and your body would be good training for anyone.

The military could even assign some of its standby crews to write new games, thus giving us more technically capable and "computer-literate" servicemen.

Brian M. Godfrey
Gaston, OR

Writing

continued from preceding page

an increasing number of cases, the supporting technical literature will make or break the sale.

"Such literature should, then, by its professional appearance and content, help build user confidence and with that a desire to buy. Post sale, that same technical literature, which now becomes an important part of the user's facility, must support the wisdom of choice by its completeness, accuracy and ease of use.

"In so doing, good technical literature aids the further development of user confidence in the product, and tends to build up a preacceptance of other products from an obviously competent source."

We need to put more good technical literature in the hands of our users, so they can more successfully use our products.

Management needs to become more aware of the importance of technical-publications departments. Good, sound technical publications, or the lack thereof, can literally make or break a company.

I'm also concerned with the presentation of technical material. In essence, I follow the empirical lead of the military: Unless you have a closely controlled readership, never write much above the sixth-grade level! Know your reader and his or her *proven* ability to read and absorb written information, particularly when the information must be complex or difficult to present.

As pointed out by Tom Shea, "Really good technical writing should be interesting and entertaining enough that you should want to read it for itself if you have a free evening."

Beyond this, avoid company-generated jargon and nonstandard technical terms like the plague!

Finally, engineers seldom make good writers. A technical writer is a curious and imaginative individual who can write. He need not have a college degree, just a well-rounded education that touches on all possible fields, a good grasp of grammar and spelling and the ability to fall in love with the subject.

It also helps if he can type.

Jay N. Woods
Hayward, CA

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Apple II Business Graphics is command-driven

By Joel Pitt

The widespread use of microcomputers has resulted in major changes in methods of making business decisions. The most widespread application of micros in decision making is probably attributable to VisiCalc and other spreadsheet packages. The use of microcomputers for business graphics is rapidly growing in importance.

Graphs are used in businesses both as a tool for exploratory analysis of data and for presentation of data. Examples of the latter include the charts and graphs that we see regularly in our newspapers or in corporate stockholder reports. Use of the former is increasing with the development of microcomputer tools that facilitate the creation of graphs.

FEATURES: Apple II Business Graphics is a command-driven graphics package that allows users to draw scatter, line, filled-area, vertical and horizontal, bar and pie graphs from their data. You can enter data by hand, using the package's integral editing facility, or data can be read directly from files maintained in a wide variety of data formats.

You can draw graphs produced by Apple Business Graphics on the Apple video display (in color when the CRT can produce it) or, as the package is originally supplied, on the Apple Silentype printer, the Qume Sprint 5 daisy-wheel printer and the HP7225A/B and HIPLOT DMP-3 and DMP-4 pen plotters.

Business and Professional Software, the developer of Apple Business Graphics, sells a dealer-oriented package called PIK that allows dealers to install drivers for any one of an additional 25 devices (including the popular Epson MX80 printer and the new HP7470 plotter) as part of the Apple Business Graphics program.

You can get the best quality presentation of graphics with plotters, but few currently available Apple graphics packages support plotter output. Apple Business Graphics does—a significant plus.

Users create "take" files of Apple Business Graphics commands and can direct Apple Business Graphics to take its input from these files. This command facility is unusual in a microcomputer package; it's more customarily found in advanced mainframe graphics packages.

You use take files to automate significant parts of chart production with Apple Business Graphics. This is especially convenient when you undertake the time-consuming task of producing hard copies of charts. You can place the necessary commands in a take file and let your Apple run virtually unattended.

See Business Graphics, page 54

InfoWorld
Software Report Card

Apple II Business Graphics

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Performance	☐	☐	☑	☐
Documentation	☐	☐	☑	☐
Ease of Use	☐	☐	☑	☐
Error Handling	☐	☐	☐	☑

System Requirements

- Apple II
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Business Graphics

continued from preceding page

Using take files, along with an Apple Business Graphics Wait command, when you make live presentations is effective and convenient. The program automatically draws on a TV screen and pauses when you need time to embellish your explanations.

The program provides a wide range of user commands to help customize graphs. A comprehensive system of defaults spares casual users from the necessity of specifying their charts in full detail. Users can specify scales for graphs, center titles on either axis or above the graph, or, using a "floating title" facility, they can put vertical or horizontal labels at any place they choose.

You can override the program's default color choices and can place vertical and/or horizontal grid lines on your charts. You have eight different marks to indicate points on scatter charts, which you can connect by solid lines or any of five different kinds of dashed lines.

With Apple Business Graphics, you can draw graphs of several different data sets on the same chart. Multiple-bar charts can have as many as four different bars side by side, and bars can be filled or unfilled. You can mix lines and bars on the same chart.

Although you cannot display more than one pie chart at any one time, you can specify the aspect ratio of pie charts and even create pies with missing slices.

The package supports exploratory uses of graphics by providing data-manipulation and curve-fitting commands. Simple English-language commands allow you to add, subtract, multiply or divide elements of a data set, either by a constant or the elements of another data set.

You can fit, using the method of least squares, a line, logarithmic curve, parabola or sine curve to the data, and you can display additional values generated from the fit as well.

By using a Distribute command, you can create a new data set in which values are the percentage of a given data set's elements that fall into each interval of a given set of intervals. With this command, you can construct histograms of given sets of data easily.

PERFORMANCE: Apple Business Graphics responds to user commands quickly and efficiently. Graphs drawn on the CRT display are quickly produced. The software fonts used for the titles are attractive. If you don't like the aesthetics of the default color choices, you can easily override them.

The algorithm that decides the automatic-scale factors performs well. I tested Apple Business Graphics' automatic-scaling algorithm with a data set from a competing package. I wanted to see if the program would produce an inappropriate scale that would then require a deliberate override. I found that Apple Business Graphics provided a viable scale automatically.

When you display multiple data sets on the same graph, however, Apple Business Graphics requires that you build the graph in stages. Since you can't change the scale after you draw the first graph, and since the program cannot anticipate the scale required by the data sets that are first entered, you may have to explicitly set the scaling rather than rely on the automatic-scaling algorithm.

In drawing bar charts with negative and positive values, the program draws bars from the zero value in the appropriate direction—that is, it draws a vertical bar corresponding to a negative value from the zero point downwards and draws a bar corresponding to a positive value from the zero point upwards.

The program places the axis of such a chart at the low vertical point of the scale, instead of at the zero point of the scale. The chart, in my opinion, does not look good.

Apple Business Graphics lacks some features that may reduce its usefulness for some people. Although you can produce multiple-bar charts with bars side by side, you can't draw

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stacked-bar charts. On pie charts, you can't highlight a detached slice.

You have to enter labels for monthly data by hand; this particular graphics program does not generate them automatically. You can't frame a graph.

Although the package allows you to fit sine curves to your data, it does not allow you to fit exponential curves to the same data.

Other features of Apple Business Graphics make it a superior performer for other groups of users, however. For example, in filling areas on graphs, you can elect to fill between the curve and the zero line or between the curve and the baseline of the curve, a choice that few other packages offer.

The program delivers its hard-copy output with a speed that seems limited only by the speed of the devices and the interface you use.

EASE OF USE: Typically, command-driven packages are more difficult to use than menu-driven packages because of the initial effort required to learn the specific command names. Apple Business Graphics eases the novice's burden by providing a help facility. If you type "help," the screen displays a list of the package's major categories and advises users they can obtain further help by typing "help" followed by the category name. The program has 14 such additional help screens.

Once you learn its wide variety of commands, you will find Apple Business Graphics reasonably easy to use. You can abbreviate a command to the minimum number of characters needed to distinguish it from other commands.

For example, you can enter the command to draw a bar graph as "DR B"—the DR is sufficient to indicate the verb draw, the B distinguishes the noun bar and the program assumes as a default that the bars you wish to draw are the more commonly preferred vertical bars rather than horizontal bars.

The take-command file capability makes the package considerably easier to use. You can save settings and titles for specific classes of graphs in these files and recall them automatically. Unfortunately, learning to use this command is difficult, and the documentation is obscure.

The integral editor is difficult to use, but these difficulties are mitigated by the ease with which the package can access data from external sources. Users who don't like the editor can readily produce their data files using the screen-oriented editor of the Apple Pascal system and transfer that data to Apple Business Graphics.

ERROR HANDLING: Apple Business Graphics responds to incorrect commands with a beep from the Apple speaker and a message that reads "? UNKNOWN COMMAND, TYPE "HELP" FOR HELP". Commands that would clear the current data are greeted by a message asking for confirmation, if you have not saved the data already.

On the whole, the package's designers have thoughtfully anticipated the usual run of user errors and have guarded against them well.

DOCUMENTATION: The documentation for Apple Business Graphics is somewhat uneven. Parts of it are excellent. For example, the manual begins with a tutorial that is well written and well paced. It can take a first-time user through most of the major features of the package in an hour or two.

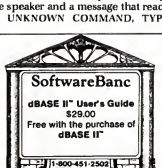
On the other hand, the documentation often fails to give adequate explanations of some of the package's more difficult features (for example, the set virtual file command) and is marred by many errors that diminish its value.

One notable feature of the documentation is the thorough discussion of the package's internal file formats. The manual carefully documents ways in which you can have Apple Business Graphics interact with other programs. This kind of support is unusual in a copy-protected program, and it makes Apple Business Graphics a more versatile and more valuable product.

SUPPORT: Business and Professional Software, the author of Apple Business Graphics, has a full-time staff member available for telephone support of the product. I called him with several questions—without identifying myself as a reviewer—and found that he was knowledgeable, open and helpful.

Unfortunately, none of the papers or documentation included in the Apple Business Graphics package indicate that this sort of help is available, and users who are less aggressive may fail to discover it.

SUMMARY: Apple II Business Graphics is a well-designed, powerful and advanced tool. It is one of the better graphics packages currently available for the Apple. It is more difficult to use than a menu-driven package, and less experienced users might not be comfortable with this program. For users who can take advantage of its substantial power, however, it is an excellent tool. ■



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F.A.C.E. produces over 120 reports in the Insurance System and Accounts Receivable. All programs are integrated to the General Ledger and the Accounts Payable. F.A.C.E. uses either an 8- or 16-bit CP/M operating system with 64K. The complete package is priced at $3995. Agate-Systems, Inc., 278 High Street, Holyoke, MA 01040.

Other

Micro-Crop introduces a wide range of application software targeted to the agribusinessman. Written in R/M COBOL, these packages are not specific but can run on virtually any microcomputer. The total Micro-Crop package includes **Crop Management, Farm Equipment, Farm Supplies, Commodity Billing and Inventory, Farm and Grower Payroll with Piecework, Fertilizer Dealer, Nurseryman and Florist.** All programs are issued on single-density 8-inch disks. Micro-Crop, 8245 NW 53rd Street, Miami, FL 33166.

Horizon Software's new word-processing program runs on UNIX and UNIX look-alikes.

A new word-processing package that runs with UNIX and UNIX look-alike operating systems is available from Horizon Software Systems. The software is designed for use in instrumentation, automation and data-processing environments. **Horizon WordProcessing** offers easy document creation, full-screen editing, complete formatting and document management.

Horizon runs on any UNIX-based operating system with a video-screen terminal and a system printer. It requires no special equipment and sells for $750. Horizon Systems, Inc., 220 Downey Street, San Francisco, CA 94117.

Radio Shack

Two educational software packages for the TRS-80 are available from Modtec. **Auto-Graph** is a program for graphing math formulas on the Models I and III. Price is $24.95.

Copy-Tape allows users to duplicate BASIC, system or data tapes. Features include forward tape advance and verify-tape copies. Price is $11.95. Modtec, 4144 North Via Villas, Tucson, AZ 85719.

InfoWorld is unable to test every product announced in this section. All claims attributed to the products have been made by manufacturers or by firms marketing these items.

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The Quasar Hand-Held Computer from Matsushita

By Scott Mace, IW Staff

The Quasar HHC (Hand-Held Computer) is one of several hand-held computers to appear within the last year. Parent company Matsushita's other subsidiary, Panasonic, released essentially the same machine. Both are similar to the Radio Shack Pocket Computer, with features such as one-line, 26-character liquid-crystal displays and calculator-pad-like keys on a QWERTY layout.

FEATURES: A 6502 microprocessor governs the HHC. System capacity includes up to three 16K plug-in ROM capsules or 4K of EPROM capsules and 2K or 4K of CMOS RAM. This CMOS and rechargeable nickel-cadmium batteries allow the computer to "remember" files even when turned off or when batteries are in need of recharging.

Like many calculators, the HHC remembers your last screen entry when turned back on. In order to conserve power, the computer shuts off after ten minutes, though with the CMOS memory, you don't lose data or files.

The HHC's operating system is actually a self-instructing, multiple-choice menu system. This approach to operating-system design is new to microcomputing. The HP-75 now has a similar menu-driven structure.

Each option in each hierarchical menu is displayed in "round-robin" fashion with its corresponding number. This works in two ways. The HHC can either require you to select a number to start an operation, or it can present a set of numbered operation settings that you can leave alone or reconfigure individually by selecting the appropriate number.

As you add or take out application capsules (which function as diskettes do in a microcomputer) or peripherals, the CPU automatically readjusts the menus, so there is no chance of encountering a nonexistent option. Options 1 through 9 are followed by option A, B and so on.

Quasar offers a number of peripherals as options for the HHC, and I will discuss some in this review. Among them are a 300- or 110-baud acoustic-coupler modem; a TV adapter to display multiple lines on a TV or monitor; an RS-232C interface that lets you use serial peripheral devices, such as printers, with the HHC or lets the HHC communicate with other computers; a small (15-column) thermal printer; an adapter for I/O to these devices using the HHC interface; and an additional RAM module of 4K, upgradable to 6K or 8K.

You can attach six such upgraded units and use them all at one time with the HHC to store files, programs or text. Recently Quasar also has released a wide-tape four-color plotter.

The TV display adapter supports up to nine colors including black. Quasar has two modes for color graphics: 64 graphic dots by 32 lines and 64 graphic dots by 48 lines.

The optional additional RAM peripheral has a backup power supply of three AAA manganese batteries with a life of about 12 months. These batteries maintain information in the RAM unit when it is disconnected from the HHC.

A sticker on the battery door indicates when you need to replace the AAA batteries. Evidently when you change these batteries, you would be wise to have the RAM peripheral plugged into the I/O adapter for power to preserve auxiliary RAM memory.

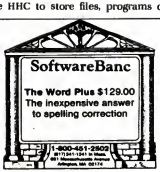
All the devices reviewed (except the plotter) fit into an attaché case that allows you to carry and use the system just about anywhere you can put it on your lap. The batteries run all the devices, including printer and modem, though you must open the case to insert the AC recharging cable when you recharge.

Three programming languages are available for the HHC. One is Microsoft BASIC, and two others are Quasar's SnapBASIC and SnapFORTH, written in Snap, a Forth-like language that can call any of the instructions for the HHC's 6502 microprocessor so critical subroutines can be written in the assembler for speed of execution.

Other standard software for the HHC includes a calculator; a clock/controller that incorporates a message and alarm system; and a flexible file system.

Three slots under the back of the HHC accept plug-in program capsules. Among the application capsules sent with our review copy were Time/Trac, a professional time-accounting

See Quasar, page 58



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Quasar

continued from preceding page

system; The Financialist, an annuity/rate calculator; and Portawriter, a word-processing program.

Other capsules now available include PortaFLEX, a data-entry language; Scientific Calculator; Telecomputing 1 and 2; and RS-232C control. Prices for capsules range from $45 to $150.

Early next year Quasar will release The Financialist and Portawriter, mentioned above; Portabudget, a checkbook-management program; Graphic Plotter, a VisiPlot-type program for creating bar and pie charts with the four-color Quasar plotter; and Porta-Calc, a spreadsheet-type program.

The capsules are shaped in such a way that it is virtually impossible to install them backwards. This thoughtful touch is not highlighted in the manual.

Here is an example of how the menu system works. My system displays the following options, one after the other, and repeats the first option after displaying the last:

1 = CALCULATOR
2 = CLOCK/CONTROLLER
3 = FILE SYSTEM
4 = RUN SNAP PROGRAMS
5 = TIME/TRAC
6 = Microsoft BASIC
7 = Portawriter
8 = SERIAL I/O
9 = TELECOMPUTING
A = TYPEWRITER

If I select option 2, I type 2 and the following menu of options is displayed:

1 = SET ALARM
2 = REVIEW
3 = ACKNOWLEDGE
4 = TIME
5 = SET TIME

The other options operate in similar fashion. You can return to the previous menu by typing CLEAR, and you can return to the primary menu at any time by typing CLEAR twice.

Attaching peripherals is accomplished in a similar manner. If you press the I/O key at the upper right, the HHC enters an I/O menu, and by selecting one of the menu numbers you attach the connection to that peripheral. A sample I/O menu looks like this:

1 = RS232C IN, OFF, SLOT = 2
2 = RS232C OUT, OFF, SLOT = 2
3 = PRINTER OUT, OFF, SLOT = 3
4 = VIDEO OUT, OFF, SLOT = 4
5 = MODEM IN, OFF, SLOT = 5
6 = MODEM OUT, OFF, SLOT = 5
7 = INT RAM, 2697 FREE
8 = EXT RAM, 6134 FREE, SLOT = 1

To turn any of these devices on, you must type the menu number desired. The HHC briefly indicates the change in on/off status for that particular device. You can then return to the primary menu by pressing the I/O key or the CLEAR key.

According to Quasar, the HHC is intended for use as a data base or problem-solving tool in remote or harsh environments, as a source data-entry terminal that can send data to or receive data from another computer and as a timesharing terminal that can interact with large, centralized data bases.

The HHC itself is about 9 inches wide, 1-1/4 inches deep and 3-3/4 inches tall. It weighs 1 pound, 4

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Quasar HHC Hand-Held Computer

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Setup	☐	☐	☐	☑
Ease of Use	☐	☐	☑	☐
Performance	☐	☐	☑	☐
Documentation	☐	☐	☑	☐
Serviceability	☐	☐	☐	☑

Features of System Tested

- 1-MHz 6502 main processor
- 1-line, 26-column LCD display
- 4K internal RAM
- Optional external RAM with 8K
- 16K internal ROM with three sockets for ROM capsules up to 16K each or EPROM capsules up to 4K each
- Optional RS-232 port
- Optional acoustic modem
- Optional TV video adapter with two modes of color graphics
- Optional 15-column Micro Printer
- Optional 40-column Mini Printer
- Optional four-color plotter
- SnapBASIC
- SnapFORTH

Price: HHC: ***$479*** with 8K
$379 with 4K
$329 with 2K
External RAM: ***$350*** with 16K
$250 with 8K
$150 with 4K
RS-232 module: ***$250***
I/O adapter: ***$150***
15-column printer: ***$225***
40-column printer: ***$295***
Acoustic modem: ***$250***
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Attaché case: ***$170***
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Small AC adapter (can run HHC and one peripheral): ***$20***
I/O extension cable: ***$85***
Capsules:
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SnapBASIC: ***$120***
Microsoft BASIC: ***$77***
PortaFLEX: ***$80***
Time/Trac: ***$99***
Scientific calculator: ***$45***
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ounces. The 65-key keyboard includes three programmable function keys and four program-definable keys. The user can redefine 62 keys under program control. The keys repeat if held down.

The display is a 159- by 8-dot liquid crystal, with ten display rates to control the speed of information as it flashes or flows by. The display shows both uppercase and lowercase letters, plus numbers and various symbols.

```
This is a test
of the
Portawriter
Word Processing
System. As you
can see, the
Word Processor
automatically
assigns words
to the next
line when there
is
insufficient
space.
```

This printout from the 15-column HHC thermal printer is actual size. The printer uses 1¼-inch-wide paper.

With modem, 4K RAM, RS-232 port, printer, TV adapter and HHC in the briefcase, the system weighs about 16 pounds. In this state, it's not exactly hand-held, but it's not as heavy as the Osborne, either.

PERFORMANCE: The HHC is tough. I dropped it on several occasions and pounded on the keys, and it survived whatever abuse I hurled at it. The HHC and its peripherals are encased in tough silver-gray and black plastic.

The touchiest part has to be connecting or disconnecting the various HHC peripherals from the I/O adapter, which is mounted on a plastic base that fits into the briefcase. Thoughtfully, Quasar installed an alarm that indicates if one or more of the I/O slot connections is not being made cleanly. Once you remove or completely insert the guilty device, the alarm stops.

Unfortunately, on occasion this alarm persists even when all the devices are apparently all the way in or out. On these occasions I had to push each device in firmly until one of them went in a bit further. The alarm is quite maddening while this search goes on.

Removing the base from the attaché case also requires some finesse, aided somewhat by a strap on the bottom of the attaché case.

Sheer neglect constituted my second abuse test. After leaving the recharger unplugged for a month, I turned on the display to find a random pattern of dots. Something was obviously amiss, as I could not bring up the usual first menu.

After turning off the ALL-OFF button at the back and turning it back on (as the manual suggested), I got a BAT LOW message on the display, indicating I had to revive the battery for a while.

The manual said 24 hours would be sufficient, but the system actually recovered within minutes after I plugged it in. The manual recommends recharging as soon as the low-battery warning appears, however, since the batteries could eventually discharge permanently if you don't recharge them.

When I started playing around with the HHC to see what it could do, I immediately began using the clock/calendar function. The clock is quite clever; after you enter the day, month and year, the computer automatically determines the day of the week.

You can enter short messages in an alarm system, such as: "Editorial meeting today." After you enter an alarm time, the computer remembers, even if turned off, to beep and display the message.

If you miss the beep, when you turn on the display, a small indicating mark appears above the letters ALARM, telling you to read a message that came

See Quasar, page 60

Hands hold Quasar Hand-Held Computer, showing 1-line, 26-column LCD display

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29 Character Title	YES	NO	YES
Author & Operator ID	YES	NO	YES
Document Size	YES	NO	YES
Creation Date	YES	NO	YES
Revision Time & Date	YES	NO	YES
Standard Editing Features	YES	YES	YES
Go To Any Page	YES	NO	YES
Interactive Printing	YES	NO	YES
Automatic Reformatting	YES	NO	YES
Automatic Repagination	YES	NO	YES
Headings and Footings	YES	YES	YES
Multi-line	YES	NO	YES
Keyboard Phrases	YES	NO	YES
Proportional Printing	NO	NO	YES
Business Graphics	NO	NO	YES
Paragraph Assembly	NO	NO	YES
Edit Marking	NO	NO	YES
Auto Widow/Orphan Protect	NO	NO	YES
Auto Footnoting	NO	NO	YES
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Quasar

continued from preceding page

while you were away.

Of course, since you can carry the HHC about anywhere you want to, you are likely to hear the alarm. The HHC's portability makes this sort of application work much better than it does on a conventional desktop computer.

Quasar's choice of application software is pretty basic fare, geared towards utilizing the system's portability. The Quasar does not take the place of a larger microcomputer in all instances, and the cost of peripherals can quickly mount up. For that reason, the HHC is not a toy, but a serious data entry and retrieval device for business and scientific uses.

I looked only briefly at Time/Trac and The Financialist. Time/Trac utilizes the portability of the HHC well. It uses the HHC's internal clock to help you time work for a client or boss, charge and bill him according to your hourly rate and print reports. This should be a hit with lawyers and other professionals. You need a serial printer to print out the reports, but the program reminds you to activate the port if it finds nothing there.

EASE OF USE: All keyboard keys are clearly marked. All keys operate in lowercase and in shift position. By using the 2nd SFT key, you make most QWERTY keys generate standard typewriter symbols such as * or %, plus several kinds of brackets.

All symbols activated by the 2nd SFT key are indicated in orange, but other function-key symbols are also indicated in orange. This is somewhat confusing, as keys with symbols such as M+, divide and multiply are only activated in the calculator mode.

Fortunately, the owners' manual has a handy flip-out color-coded chart explaining the purpose and use of each key during various modes of operation.

The Quasar is no substitute for a typewriter keyboard. The QWERTY keys and space bar are essentially in the right places, but they are so small my fingers kept missing them.

Touch typists will also find the Shift key annoying, since if it is depressed simultaneously with the letter you wish to capitalize, the next letter is likely to be capitalized as well.

If you first press the Shift key, then the letter, the shift is dropped after you type the first letter. The Shift key is designed to revert back to lowercase after capitalizing one letter (unless it is locked), but a simultaneous keystroke usually reactivates it—an annoying problem.

The inadequate size of the keys is going to stop all but those determined to have a hand-held QWERTY keyboard, so unless you're willing to look at the new Espon QX-10 or wait for future products, this is the best keyboard you will get in the hand-held category. (The HP-75's angled keyboard is somewhat of an improvement over the HHC, but not much.)

The LCD display is easily readable, and you can adjust the text-scrolling speed to suit your tastes. A separate video monitor helps readability a great deal.

The system of menus, with the options written in plain English, is easy to use. I was able to begin creating files and operating the peripheral devices within minutes.

The video output is especially helpful. I attached a USI International monitor to the HHC using a video cable borrowed from our Apple II, and I was

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☆ Easy File®	NA / 289
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pleased to see a 16-line display of a text file.

Unfortunately, this arrangement is no substitute for a real terminal, since moving the cursor up a line causes the monitor to repeat that line. It is an improvement over the one-line, 26-character HHC display, though. Also, you can't feed the HHC's video display of the primary menu and many of the applications to a monitor.

Using the modem and RS-232C hardware requires more knowledge and work but still is fairly simple for anyone with prior experience. The novice will need more help from the manual and other sources.

When you enter the serial I/O configuration menu, you are faced with a number of choices (five abbreviated some of the messages):

1 = HALF DUPLEX (or HOST FULL DUPLEX or TERMINAL FULL DUPLEX)
2 = 8 DATA BITS (or 5, 6 or 7 DATA BITS)
3 = DROP DATA PARITY BIT (or NO DATA PARITY BIT)
4 = 1 STOP BIT (or 2 STOP BITS)
5 = DISABLED PARITY (or ODD PARITY or EVEN PARITY)
6 = NO PROTOCOL (or ETX-ACK PROTOCOL or RECEIVE XON-XOFF or SEND XON-XOFF or SEND & RECEIVE XON-XOFF)
7 = RS232C AUTOLINEFEED OFF (or ON)
8 = VIDEO AUTOLINEFEED OFF (or ON)
9 = DISREGARD CARRIER SIGNAL (or CHECK CARRIER SIGNAL)
A = DROP HHC ESCAPE SEQ'S (or SEND HHC ESCAPE SEQ'S)
B = 64 CHARACTER ETX BLOCK (or DESIRED LENGTH =)
C = LOW SPEED [110 baud] (or HIGH SPEED [300 baud])

Of course, in this case you would have to know all the particular protocols of the other computer or device, but the HHC provides a surprising degree of flexibility in a small capsule.

The modem configuration and operation is similar, and each program runs off a ROM capsule talking to the HHC from the peripherals themselves. Presumably different capsules could be developed for specialized uses.

I attempted a short transmission from the HHC to an IBM PC using the RS-232C port, and within minutes I

See Quasar, page 62

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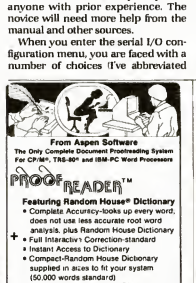

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Quasar

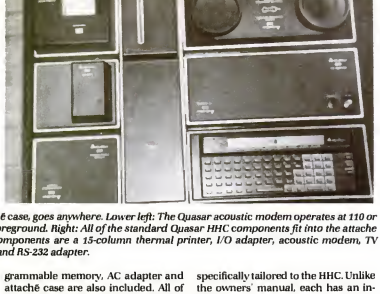
continued from preceding page

successfully transmitted text to the PC. Unfortunately, the incoming text was garbled "off by 16 bits," according to one *BV* staffer), and we were unable to correct it. Despite this, the RS-232C program appeared to be easy to use.

Word wrap is provided only in the Portawriter word-processing capsule to be released early next year. Portawriter includes a number of improvements over the regular file system, including search and replace, end-of-file/beginning-of-file cursor commands and an ingenious program to concatenate files to save space when they are not in use.

DOCUMENTATION: The Quasar manuals with our system came neatly tucked into a pocket in the lid of the attaché case. All are spiral-bound, 8-½ by 4-3/4-inch pages. All books are typeset and presented in a readable style.

The owners' manual for the HHC is 60 pages and includes the flip-out keyboard diagram mentioned earlier. The manual discusses the keyboard, display, I/O and capsules. Also, the manual includes a summary of editing commands by key function. One section, "When Things Go Wrong," did a fairly good job of handling all serious possible failures. The manual has no index but does include a four-page glossary of terms.



Upper left: The Quasar HHC, in its attaché case, goes anywhere. Lower left: The Quasar acoustic modem operates at 110 or 300 baud. Note the HHC plug-in bus in foreground. Right: All of the standard Quasar HHC components fit into the attache case. Clockwise, from upper left, the components are a 15-column thermal printer, I/O adapter, acoustic modem, TV adapter, HHC, programmable memory and RS-232 adapter.

The manual for the RS-232C unit, with wiring diagrams for communication between HHCs or connections to modems, follows the hardware descriptions. The modem manual follows, with an explanation of the Telecomputing 1 capsule included with the modem.

Next is the I/O adapter manual, and instructions for removing and adding peripherals or the HHC to the I/O adapter. Short manuals for the programmable memory, AC adapter and attaché case are also included. All of the manuals mentioned above are compiled in the same binding.

I found no misspellings or inaccuracies in the manuals, although in the description of the modem someone hand-deleted the phrase "to any telephone in the world" following the statement that the modem is your connection to the telephone system.

Also included with our review copy were two more manuals: a tutorial to Microsoft BASIC and a reference guide for Microsoft BASIC. Both of these are specifically tailored to the HHC. Unlike the owners' manual, each has an index.

SERVICEABILITY: The HHC and its peripherals come with a one-year warranty on all parts and labor. Quasar services the machines at ten locations around the country. There is no charge for walk-in warranty service, and Quasar pays return postage for air or ground shipment to the closest service center. Service contracts are available to OEM customers only.

The HHC system is highly modularized, and it is difficult for users to perform their own servicing. Capsules or peripherals are easily removed for servicing. Peripherals attach to a standard bus, so you can remove or rotate them without complication.

SETUP: Before using the HHC for the first time, you have to engage the rechargeable nickel-cadmium batteries, which are disconnected during storage and shipping.

You must locate the recessed switch, marked ALL-OFF, on the bot-

See Quasar, page 63

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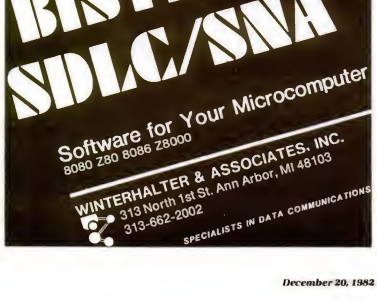
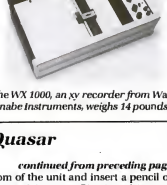


New peripherals

Watanabe Instruments has announced its new x,y recorder, called the **WX 1000**. The 14-pound printer is a single-pen plotter with a recording area of 10×7 inches. The price is $1175. Watanabe Instruments Corporation, 3186-D Airway Avenue, Costa Mesa, CA 92626.



The WX 1000, an xy recorder from Watanabe Instruments, weighs 14 pounds.

New systems

Convergent Technologies has announced the **AWS Turbo Color Graphics Workstation**. The new unit adds full-color graphics to the recently introduced AWS Turbo Workstation at only a modest increase in price, according to the company.

The unit offers OEMs the capability to turn digital and numeric data into color charts, graphs and pictures for business, scientific and engineering applications.

Each AWS Turbo Workstation consists of a 16-bit 8086 processor, an intelligent graphics board with a dedicated graphics processor, RAM, fully programmable keyboard and a 15-inch high-resolution video display.

The graphics display is organized as a combined graphics and alphanumeric system that lets users view any combination of text and graphics simultaneously. The board incorporates the new NEC 7220 graphics processor chip and 128K of display memory.

Pricing for the AWS Turbo Graphics Workstation, in single-unit quantities, ranges from $12,190 to $13,790 for a unit with a 16-megabyte disk. Convergent Technologies, 2500 Augustine Drive, Santa Clara, CA 95051.

HP 44538A standard test fixture

New tools

Hewlett-Packard is selling three new test fixtures that make it easy to test printed circuit boards of various sizes, up to 10.75×14.25 inches. The test fixtures include a vacuum chamber and a hinged test head that you can lock in the open position to check or change the wiring. Probes are guided to a tolerance of 0.015 inch (0.4 mm).

Software supplied with the HP 3060A board-test systems helps verify or troubleshoot the test fixtures.

The **HP 44538A standard fixture** costs $655; the **HP 44539A large fixture** costs $830; the **HP 44540A dual fixture** costs $985. An **HP44541A construction kit** to put the fixtures together with costs about $800. Call your local Hewlett-Packard sales office.

InfoWorld is unable to test every product announced in this section. All claims attributed to the products have been made by manufacturers or by firms marketing these items.

Quasar

continued from preceding page

tom of the unit and insert a pencil or screwdriver. By flipping this two-position switch from off to on, you activate the power system, as well as internal memory, the clock/controller date and the primary menu.

Any attached peripherals, such as the printer, which all draw their power from the HHC's bus, also become active at this time. The display remains blank until you press the ON key at the upper-right edge of the keyboard.

You are supposed to keep the ALL-OFF switch on unless you are storing the HHC for an extended period of time. In that case you should preserve the life of the batteries by flipping the switch to off. You can also use this maneuver as a troubleshooting tactic when all else fails.

If a BAT LOW message appears, you should plug the AC adapter into the jack on the side of the HHC, and full recharging takes place within 24 hours. While any charging is taking place, you should leave the AC adapter in a ventilated spot to avoid excess heat buildup.

The owners' manual competently covers these setup procedures. It recommends that you turn the HHC display off when you are connecting or disconnecting peripherals.

SUMMARY: Aside from our unsuccessful attempt to receive data from another computer, the HHC performed its tasks well. The printer and other components operated without failure, and I was impressed by the ease of use of the primary and secondary menus. The small keyboard remains the biggest problem of this machine, one that will not be easily solved.

The pricing of various components is not as aggressive as it could be, with competitors such as the Hewlett-Packard HP-75 on the HHC's heels. Despite this, the HHC is an impressive example of how technology can be compressed into a small space. Perhaps this is the prototype for more acceptable portable computers. ■

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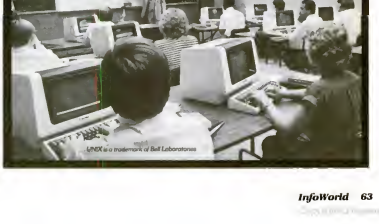

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Face-to-face with a purple archaeologist

By Michael Swaine, IW Staff

"That's not Elmo S. Loons," Casey Standard said, referring to the tall, trenchcoat-wrapped figure who had stepped out of the jungle to point a gun at Casey and her boss, Mr. Usasi. This, she thought, was worse than tarantulas.

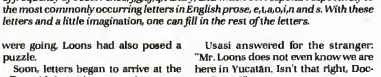
Tarantulas, in fact, had not been the worst of their trip, not even discounting the present gun-toter. It had all begun, she recalled, months ago, at a lecture on Mayan writing in a bookstore in Palo Alto, California. Rhonda Forris, the well-known Mayan scholar and archaeologist, had posed an unsolved problem in Mayan mathematics, and Mr. Usasi had solved it, impressing both Forris and a cigar-puffing man named Elmo S. Loons, who worked for an East Coast magazine and made a hobby of the study of Mayan literature. As Usasi and Casey El Chichón the previous spring, they had set off into the jungle and swamp land of darkest Yucatán.

Attacked by insects, their food going faster than Casey had expected and barely able to follow, under the red sky, the star-based instructions their correspondent had modified from ancient documents to conform with stars that they could see, they finally reached the maze.

Usasi's puzzle skills got them through the dark stone labyrinth, with its pits and tarantulas, to the artifact—a gold tarantula—and back out to the brick-red sky and the armed intruder.

"I quite agree," Mr. Usasi said. "This is not Elmo S. Loons." The figure before them was heavily swathed in trenchcoat and hat, but it was not the amateur Mayan scholar.

"Did Loons send you here?" Casey Standard demanded.



The smeared message that led Usasi to the maze decodes to: "Walk in a westerly direction to a creek and see that it is not a deep one. Follow the stream." The visible ascenders and descenders define seven different letters, which are, in order of frequency of occurrence, f,g,i,j,q,t and y, and which correspond respectively to the most commonly occurring letters in English prose, e,t,a,o,i,n and s. With these letters and a little imagination, one can fill in the rest of the letters.

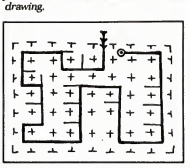
were going, Loons had also posed a puzzle.

Soon, letters began to arrive at the office with Loons' name on them, posing other puzzles, all of which Usasi solved. The point of the puzzles, their correspondent explained, was to test Usasi's puzzle-solving ability, to see if he was good enough to solve the real puzzle: a life-size stone maze, hidden for centuries in the jungles of Yucatán, reputed to be the resting place of an artifact of great value—both archaeological and monetary.

Their correspondent professed a purely scientific interest. Usasi's only interest was in having another problem to solve. Casey Standard had thought it might be fun, but now she wondered.

But they had taken up the challenge and flown, secretly, to Yucatán, following instructions in the letters. After buying supplies under the somber red umbrella of dust raised by the volcano

The path through the Yucatán maze: the artifact was located in the room adjacent to the entrance, as shown in the drawing.



the trenchcoat off her arm. "I see I don't need this disguise. It was too hot, anyway." Her face had a deep, red cast. "If you think you're insulting me by calling me a criminal, Usasi, don't. I never rise to insults. 'Prudent,' though, is apt. I am a very prudent person."

"Which explains your actually visiting Yucatán when you wrote the directions for getting through the swamp by the positions of stars. You knew that El Chichón had changed the night sky and you wanted to be sure we could see the stars you used."

Casey Standard looked at him. "So that's how you knew it wasn't Loons! He was tied up with a full-time job in New York . . ."

"And the stellar directions were too perfectly suited to the altered atmospheric conditions here. After concluding that our correspondent was not Loons, I could imagine only one other source of the letters: Rhonda Forris, who followed us here and now demands her booty."

Forris was breathing heavily and wiping sweat from her brow. "Clever, Usasi, but as you observed, I am prudent. I cannot allow you to take your knowledge out of this jungle."

Usasi looked down at his feet and asked quietly, "But who will take you to the hospital, Doctor Forris?"

"Hospital?" she blinked, shook her head as if to clear it, and wiped her forehead. Her face was vaguely purple now. "What—"

"You ate from the food packages I dropped behind, Doctor. It is, shall we say, written on your face."

The archaeologist grasped her throat and took a step back, grimacing hideously. "Poison!" she gasped.

Mr. Usasi took the gun from her hand and picked up her trenchcoat. "There is really no need for melodrama. You will be uncomfortable until you pass out, but will live if we get you to a hospital soon. Your plan, while prudent, was flawed. You see, when I saw the red sky and considered the pains you had taken with the star directions, I felt it would be prudent to play upon your own prudence—and greed. I was certain you would not allow the food to go to waste.—Shall we go, Ms. Standard?" ■

Next Time

Our last issue of 1982 features something a bit different. Next week we lay all worldly cares aside to talk for a while about the supernal world of religious software.

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We'll have continuing coverage of the recent COMDEX show in Las Vegas.

Also next week, we'll evaluate three file-management programs for the TRS-80 computer and a text formatter for the Heath/Zenith computers called Text 4.0.

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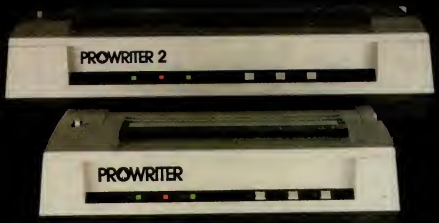

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